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DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

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Tata shareholders appoint Noel as Director

NEW DELHI, 14 AUG

Shareholders of Tata Sons unanimously approved all six resolutions at the company's AGM held virtually on Thursday, including the appointment of Noel N Tata, Chairman of Tata Trusts, as a Director. He was appointed as an Additional Director from 22 October 2024, following Ratan Tata's death. The Shapoorji Pallonji Group, which holds 18.4 per cent in Tata Sons, supported all resolutions. Tata Trusts holds 66 per cent. *—PTI*

Raj Bhavan open to public from 16-18 Aug

NEW DELHI, 14 AUG

Raj Bhavan here will be open to the public from 16 to 18 August, between 4pm and 7.30pm, to mark the 79th Independence Day. Visitors will be allowed in designated viewing areas under the supervision of security personnel and staff. Entry requires a valid government-issued photo identity card, a statement said. All electronic devices, including mobile phones, laptops, and cameras, as well as sharp or metallic objects, snacks, plastic items, bags, handbags, tobacco products, and alcoholic beverages, will be prohibited inside, it added. *—PTI*

79 YEARS OF FREEDOM, BUT ARE WE TRULY FREE?

HERE'S A QUICK LOOK AT WHERE INDIA STANDS GLOBALLY

Human Development Index:
130 out of 193 nations

Life Expectancy Index:
125 out of 201

Global Hunger Index:
105 out of 127*

Press Freedom Index:
151 out of 180

Global Gender Gap Index:
131 out of 148

World Happiness Index:
118 out of 147

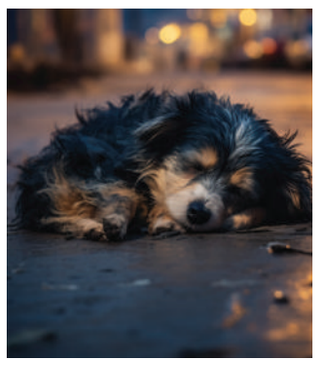
Corruption Perception Index:
96 out of 180*

Index of Economic Freedom:
128 out of 184

Internet Freedom:
296 internet shutdowns happened globally in 2024, 84 (i.e. 28%) were in India.

* These are 2024 data, 2025 numbers are yet to be released.

Stray dogs case: SC says whole issue due to authorities' inaction



NEW DELHI, 14 AUG

The Supreme Court on Thursday held local authorities responsible for the stray dog crisis in Delhi-NCR, citing their "inaction" and failure to implement existing rules. The bench, comprising Justices Vikram Nath, Sandeep Mehta and NV Anjaria, reserved its verdict on pleas seeking a stay on the 11 August order mandating relocation of stray dogs to shelters.

The bench asked why authorities in several areas started picking up the animals even before the earlier order became public.

The earlier bench of Justices JB Pardiwala and R Mahadevan had directed authorities to begin relocating strays, starting with shelters for 5,000 dogs. However, the new bench observed that while laws exist, implementation is lacking.

"The problem is due to inaction of local authorities," the court noted, also criticising the Animal Welfare Board and NGOs for inaction. "NGOs make noise but lack execution," it added.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta presented 2024 data showing 37.15 lakh dog bite cases nationwide—around 10,000 daily. He stressed the need for resolution over litigation, warning, "Children are dying. This is not about animal hate, but public safety."

Senior advocates Kapil Sibal and Abhishek Manu Singhvi opposed the 11 August order, arguing that no proper shelters or sterilisation programmes exist. Sibal claimed 700 dogs were picked up with no clarity on their whereabouts. Singhvi pointed to zero reported rabies deaths in Delhi between 2022–2025, warning against fearmongering.

Sidharth Luthra highlighted the ripple effect of the order on other high courts. The bench questioned the Delhi government on compliance with Animal Birth Control Rules.

Protests have erupted nationwide following the 11 August order, as the Court seeks to balance public safety with animal rights. The final ruling is awaited. *—PTI*

Cloudburst wrecks Kishtwar, 46 killed

Torrents of water, mud tore through the town

KISHTWAR/JAMMU, 14 AUG

At least 46 people, including two CISF personnel, were killed and many others trapped after a massive cloudburst triggered flash floods in Chositi village of Jammu and Kashmir's Kishtwar district on Thursday. The disaster struck between 12 noon and 1 pm, turning the serene pilgrimage route to Machail Mata temple into a scene of devastation.

Chositi, the last motorable point before the 8.5km trek to the 9,500-ft shrine, was packed with devotees participating in the annual yatra that began on 25 July. A 'langar' (community kitchen), shops and a security outpost were washed away as torrents of water, mud and debris tore through the remote Himalayan village.

Rescuers, working into the night, pulled out 167 people from the debris, 38 of whom are critically injured. Officials fear the death toll may rise further as search operations continue. The flash floods destroyed several structures, while videos showed homes collapsing, roads being blocked by boulders, and the landscape submerged under thick sludge.

This tragedy comes just nine days after a similar flash flood hit Uttarakhand's Uttarkashi, where 68 remain missing.

President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed their condolences and assured that the situation is being closely monitored. Union Home Minister Amit Shah spoke with Lt Governor Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to assess the situation. Shah confirmed NDRF teams have been deployed and that relief efforts are underway.

The Army's White Knight Corps swiftly launched rescue operations. "Efforts are centred on safeguarding lives and aiding survivors," the Corps said, adding that medical teams, relief stores, and rescue equipment have been rushed to the site.

An affected area after a massive cloudburst at Chasoti village, in Jammu and Kashmir's Kishtwar district on Thursday **PHOTO: PTI**

The Machail Mata yatra has been suspended. The Chief Minister also cancelled the 'At Home' tea party and all cultural events linked to Independence Day celebrations, citing the tragic loss of life. Only formal proceedings such as the ceremonial speech and march past will go ahead.

Fresh teams of NDRF have been dispatched from Jammu as the search for the missing continues.

Videos from the area show pilgrims being hurriedly evacuated amid panic and chaos. *—PTI*

Celebs not above law: SC sends Darshan, Pavithra back to jail

NEW DELHI, 14 AUG

The Supreme Court on Thursday cancelled the bail granted to actor Darshan and co-accused in the Renukaswamy murder case, ordering them to surrender. Emphasising that celebrities are not above the law, the court said their public status brings greater accountability.

A bench of Justices JB Pardiwala and R Mahadevan criticised the Karnataka High Court's December 2023 bail order, calling it a "mechanical exercise" that failed to consider the serious allegations, including conspiracy and murder under Section 302 IPC.

"No individual, however influential or famous, is exempt from the rigours of the law," the court observed, adding, "Popularity cannot be a shield for impunity."

The court noted the crime was premeditated, not an act of provocation, involving destruction of evidence, including deletion of CCTV footage and attempts to derail the investigation through influence and bribery. The bail had been granted on the grounds of Darshan's alleged urgent medical condition, which the court found to be "misleading, vague, and exaggerated" after reviewing records.

Darshan being taken to custody after his arrest in Bengaluru on Thursday **PHOTO: PTI**

The bench also highlighted Darshan's "VIP treatment" in jail and violations of prison rules, stating this showed a real risk of witness tampering and obstruction of justice.

"Celebrities serve as role models. Their accountability is greater, not lesser," the court said. "Leniency in such grave cases undermines public confidence in the justice system."

Justice Pardiwala asserted, "No man is above the law or below it... The need of the hour is to maintain rule of law at all times." The court warned the state against providing any special treatment in jail, saying any such report would result in immediate suspension of prison officials. Darshan, actress Pavithra Gowda, and others are accused of torturing and murdering fan Renukaswamy in June 2024. *—PTI*

>>>*More on Page 2*

Devotees file suit to protect Dharmasthala Temple in SIT case

BENGALURU, 14 AUG

In a first-of-its-kind legal move in India, two devotees of Sri Kshetra Dharmasthala have filed a civil suit in the Bengaluru City Civil and Sessions Court, seeking to prevent the misuse of the temple's name to shield individuals under investigation by a Special Investigation Team.

The suit alleges that certain media outlets and an individual are invoking the temple's sanctity to defend the accused, amounting to spiritual desecration and a violation of the plaintiffs' religious freedom. The devotees seek a permanent injunction against this misuse, claiming it obstructs justice and stirs communal discord.

Notices were issued to ARG Outlier Media Pvt Ltd, Asianet News Network Pvt Ltd, Vasanth Giliyar, and unnamed online individuals. The court will hear on 23 August, 2025. *—PTI*

LITTLE HANDS, BIG SALUTE

A heartwarming moment unfolds at Tawi Bridge in Jammu as a child salutes a security personnel on the eve of Independence Day **PHOTO: PTI**

Publish data of 65L deleted Bihar voters: SC to EC

NEW DELHI, 14 AUG

The Supreme Court on Thursday directed the Election Commission of India (ECI) to publish the names of 65 lakh voters deleted from the electoral rolls in Bihar, along with reasons, to ensure transparency in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and Joymalya Bagchi, hearing pleas challenging the ECI's 24 June decision, ordered that the deletion lists—citing death, migration or duplication—be displayed at panchayat and district-level offices. Wide publicity through newspapers, TV, and radio was also mandated.

Citizens whose names have been removed can approach election officials with their Aadhaar card to seek redress.

The Court scheduled the next hearing for 22 August and asked the EC to file a compliance report.

On 1 August, the EC stated that out of the 65 lakh deletions, 22.34 lakh were due to deaths, 36.28 lakh due to permanent migration, and 7.01 lakh due to duplication. Senior advocate Rakesh Dwivedi, for the EC, asserted the Commission had the authority to act, despite operating in an "atmosphere of sharp political hostility". He added that about 6.5 crore people wouldn't need to re-submit documents as they or their parents were in the 2003 electoral roll. *—PTI*

>>>*More on Page 3*

CAN'T IGNORE PAHALGAM ATTACK: SC HEARS J&K STATEHOOD

NEW DELHI, 14 AUG

The Supreme Court on Thursday sought a response from the Centre on a plea seeking the restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir, saying ground realities, including the recent Pahalgam incident cannot be ignored.

"You also have to take into consideration the ground realities... you cannot ignore what has happened in Pahalgam," CJI BR Gavai said when counsel including senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan sought an early hearing.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, opposed the plea and sought its dismissal, citing previous rejections and costs imposed by the court. He added that elections had been held, and the region had "peculiar considerations".

The plea, filed by academic Zahoor Ahmad Bhat and socio-political activist Ahmad Malik, was posted for hearing in eight weeks. Senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, representing Bhat, argued that 21 months had passed since the Supreme Court upheld the abrogation of Article 370 and promised restoration of statehood. The Constitution Bench had not fixed a timeline, trusting the Centre's assurance. The 11 December, 2023, judgment upheld the revocation of Article 370 and ordered assembly elections by September 2024, directing statehood be restored "at the earliest". The plea warned that continued delay undermines federalism and democratic representation. *—PTI*

REWARD FOR COURAGE

Nation honours Op Sindoor heroes with Gallantry Medal

NEW DELHI, 14 AUG

On the eve of Independence Day, the Indian government announced gallantry awards for 36 Indian Air Force personnel and 16 Border Security Force (BSF) soldiers involved in Operation Sindoor, a coordinated retaliatory strike against terror and military assets in Pakistan from 7–10 May. The operation followed the 22 April Pahalgam terror attack that killed 26 civilians.

Nine IAF officers, including fighter pilots who struck targets in Muridke and Bahawalpur, were awarded the Vir Chakra, India's third-highest wartime gallantry medal.

One officer received the Shaurya Chakra, and 26 others were honoured with the Vayu Sena Medal.

For the first time, the prestigious Sarvottam Yudh Seva Medal was conferred on senior officers from all three services for operational leadership in Operation Sindoor. Recipients include Lt Gen Pratik Sharma, Vice Admiral Sanjay Jasjit Singh (Retd), and Air Marshals Narmdeshwar Tiwari, Nagesh Kapoor, Jeetandra Mishra, and A.K. Bharti.

Sixteen BSF personnel were awarded gallantry medals for acts of exceptional bravery, including engaging enemy drones, destroying surveillance posts, and delivering ammunition under fire. Two BSF personnel were martyred and seven injured during the operation. Sub-Inspector Vyas Dev, who lost a leg, and Constable Suddi Rabha, who sustained injuries while resupplying frontline troops, were among those honoured.

Union Home Ministry declared 1,090 service medals for police and paramilitary forces. *—PTI*

DKS flags 'conspiracy' against Dharmasthala

HM: Will take action against whistleblower if nothing found

BENGALURU, 14 AUG

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said there was a massive conspiracy to tarnish the image of Dharmasthala.

"I believe in Dharmasthala and its administrative board," he said in the Legislative Assembly on Thursday.

The Opposition BJP had accused the Congress government of a "slander campaign" against the temple town, over the mass burial case.

"Let's not politicise this," Shivakumar remarked. "Why would Congress party intervene in this? Don't drag the Congress High Command into this. The Dharmadhikari of Dharmasthala has been doing yeoman service, we have not doubt about it. Someone has alleged crimes due to an internal feud.... We believe in the holiness of Dharmasthala more than you".

Similarly, Home Minister G Parameshwara said that action can be taken under the law against the complainant-witness if the Special Investigation Team (SIT) finds his allegations to be false.

"The police are doing their duty in the pursuit of justice, but that does not mean they will follow everything the complainant says. There is a limit, and the truth will emerge in due course," Parameshwara said in the Assembly.

Speaking to reporters later, Shivakumar added, "A conspiracy is being hatched to destroy hundreds of years of legacy. It is not correct to tarnish someone just like that. It has all happened due to one complainant."

"Many members have spoken about this issue. I have told them that action must be taken against those who are misleading the investigation," he added. "The CM has also said that action must be taken against such people. I have information on this case. Dharma must not be tarnished. Culprits must be punished".

HATE SPEECH LAW

Parameshwara said that a new law will be brought against those who allegedly make hate speech that has hurt and incited communal sentiments in recent years.

"In the coastal region, communal harmony has been disturbed in recent years," he said. "Hate speech and provocative posts on social media have led to violence. Therefore, a new law will be implemented against those who make hate speech in the coming days."

TEMPLES BAN PLASTIC

Revenue Minister and Muzrai Minister Ramalinga Reddy announced that all types of plastic will be strictly prohibited in temples managed by the State Religious Endowment (Muzrai) Department.

300KM RAILWAY BARRICADES

Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre said the government plans to construct an additional 300kms of railway barricades at a cost of Rs 500 crore in forest areas to address human-elephant conflict.

SCREENING FOR AUTO, CAB DRIVERS?

Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao said the government is mulling a separate health screening programme for autorickshaw and cab drivers amid reports of a rise in heart attack cases. He said that they accounted for 20-30 per cent of heart attack cases last year. *—Salar News with Agencies*

Squeezing scholars, funding selfies: India to lose its biggest asset

BY MANSOOR ALI KHAN

India's greatest wealth lies not in stock market indices or high-rise skylines, but in its young citizens. Over a quarter of the population (27.2 per cent) is between 15 and 29 years of age, and the choice of whether this demographic profile becomes a dividend or a liability hangs by a thread.

In recent years, government data and budget documents show a steady rollback in scholarships and fellowships for students from Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, and minority communities. The Maulana Azad National Fellowship (MANF), once a lifeline for MPhil and PhD scholars from minority backgrounds, was discontinued from 2022-23. The Pre-Matric Scholarship for minorities, which earlier covered Classes 1–10, now supports only Classes 9–10, cutting support precisely at the stage when many vulnerable students are most at risk of dropping out.

Flagship talent-nurturing programmes have also been curtailed. The National Talent Search Examination (NTSE) remains "stalled until further orders", while the Kishore Vaigyanik Protsahan Yojana (KVPY) has been discontinued and subsumed under INSPIRE without clear evidence of equivalent funding or reach. Research initiatives such as IMPRINT and IMPRESS, which received significant initial allocations, have not been renewed for sustained, long-term impact.

Several other schemes have been reduced or discontinued. The Padho Pardesh interest-subsidy scheme for minority students pursuing overseas education loans ended in 2022-23. The Dr Ambedkar interest-subsidy scheme for OBC/EBC students continues, but only in name as funding forecasts remain uncertain. Allocations for SC and OBC research fellowships have been re-homed under "scheme consolidation" post-NEP 2020, often resulting in lower net outlays despite claims of reform.

Minority scholarships have seen significant cuts, including reductions in the Merit-cum-Means Scholarship for professional and technical courses. The National Fellowship for SC students has seen a 40 per cent cut in slots, and the National Fellowship for OBC students, a 50 per cent cut.

Shockingly, however, allocations for Pariksha Pe Charcha, the Prime Minister's annual student interaction, have risen sharply: from ₹3.67 crore in 2018 to ₹18.82 crore in 2025, a 522 per cent increase. These funds have gone into branding, large-scale event management, and "selfie booths". While motivation is valuable, budgetary choices reveal priorities, and here, spectacle has grown while student support has shrunk. A trait very symbolic of this government, where it is more important to be seen as doing things than to be doing them.

This matters today because our youth labour market remains fragile. According to the Periodic Labour Force Survey, youth unemployment stands at 10.2 per cent in 2023-24. Industry reports continue to flag serious skill gaps and mismatches between education outcomes and job requirements, leading to layoffs and recruitment pauses.

Scholarships and fellowships are more than fiscal allocations; they are social investments. They enable children from low-income families to stay in school, help talented students pursue higher education, and support research that contributes to national development. When such support is reduced, it severely impacts the very groups that face barriers to education.

To reverse the trend and fulfil the equity goals set out in the National Education Policy, several measures are essential:

- Restore or adequately replace discontinued schemes such as MANF, NTSE, and KVPY, ensuring that consolidation does not translate into funding cuts.
- Reinstate early-stage support by reversing the Pre-Matric Scholarship cut for minorities to include Classes 1–8, where dropout risks are highest.
- Safeguard early-talent identification programmes by publishing audited outcome data for any merged or replaced schemes.
- Align education budgets with the NEP's 6 per cent of GDP target, ensuring a significant share is directed to student aid.
- Rebalance spending priorities so that scholarships and fellowships grow faster than event budgets.

Every rupee invested in a scholarship is a step towards reducing inequality, building skills, and unlocking India's full economic potential. The choice is clear: invest in students, not in stages; in scholars, not in selfies.

Mansoor Ali Khan is AICC Secretary

Renukaswamy's father praises SC over Darshan verdict

BENGALURU, 14 AUG

The family of murder victim Renukaswamy welcomed the Supreme Court's decision to cancel actor Darshan's bail on Thursday, saying it restored their faith in justice.

The apex court directed authorities to take Darshan and the other accused into custody immediately and ordered the trial to be conducted expeditiously.

"Our faith in the government, judiciary and police have strengthened after the Supreme Court cancelled Darshan's bail. We thank the authorities. Our aim is to see that the criminal is punished, which will bring peace to my son," said Renukaswamy's father, **Shivanagouda**. He added that the decision reinforced the principle that the law is equal for all, regardless of wealth or influence.

The judgment follows an appeal by the Karnataka government against the state high court's 13 December, 2024, order granting bail to Darshan and co-accused.

Darshan, actress Pavithra Gowda, and several others are accused of abducting and torturing 33-year-old Renukaswamy, a fan who allegedly sent obscene messages to Pavithra. The victim was reportedly held in a shed in Bengaluru for three days before his body was recovered from a drain.

Prime accused, actress Pavithra Gowda ***PHOTO: MOHAMMAD ASAD***

Security has been heightened at Ballari prison in anticipation of Darshan's transfer. A high-security cell has been prepared, and the compound wall has been raised to 25 feet to prevent fan intrusion.

Independence Day preparations are continuing alongside the enhanced security measures. *—PTI*

No '5-star treatment' to Darshan: HM warns DGP Prisons

Home Minister G Parameshwara on Thursday instructed the Director General of Police of Prisons to exercise caution after the Supreme Court's strong observations regarding the alleged five-star treatment provided to actor Darshan Thoogudeepa in the jail. "The DGP Prisons will have to perform his duty carefully," he said. Darshan was photographed caught smoking with a coffee.

BBMP chief urges officials to fix potholes

BENGALURU, 14 AUG

Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike Chief Commissioner Maheshwar Rao has instructed officials to expedite the closure of potholes on City roads. During a virtual meeting, he urged, "Develop comprehensive micro-plans for your respective zones and close all potholes using hot mix, cold mix, or eco-fix materials within deadlines." Rao emphasised prioritising repairs on major arterial and sub-arterial roads. Traffic Police data reveals 4,500 potholes citywide, with 3,621 under BBMP's jurisdiction. "All identified potholes must be closed immediately," he stressed, insisting contractors be held accountable. He also highlighted the importance of inter-departmental coordination and the need for post-repair photographs to be uploaded for verification. The meeting was attended by several senior officials, including Special Commissioner (Planning) Karigowda and Joint Police Commissioner (Traffic) Karthik Reddy. *—PTI*

SOVEREIGNTY ABOVE AND BELOW

Artistes dressed as a mermaids perform underwater at the Aquarium Paradise on the eve of Independence Day in Bengaluru on Thursday ***PHOTO: MOHAMMAD ASAD***

18 State cops get President's Police Medal

BENGALURU, 14 AUG

The State selected 18 police officers for the President's Police Medal on the occasion of Independence Day. SP Badrinath, Superintendent of Police at the Lokayukta Central Office in Bengaluru, was awarded the President's Medal for Meritorious Service for exceptional performance in handling complex cases.

The other awardees are: Chandragupta, IGP (Intel); Kala Krishnamurthy, Additional IGP (Chief of Crime); Ramakrishna Muddipai, Commandant, 9th Battalion, KSRP; Kalimani Mahadeva Shantharaju, SP, Intelligence; N Venkatesh Narayan, SP, CID; G Praveen Babu, Inspector, Mahadevapura Police Station; Prakash Rathod, ACP, KG Halli Sub-Division; Edwin Pradeep Samson, Inspector, BESCOM; Satish Sadasivayya Bettahalli, Inspector, Parappana Agrahara Station; Shantharam, Inspector, Nandagudi Police Station; Sujan Shetty, ASI, Mangaluru CCB; Jhansi Rani, PSI, Bengaluru SCRB; Gururaj Mahadeva Buddil, ASI, DPO, Gadag district; MJ Rajesh, Head Constable, 4th Battalion, KSRP, Bengaluru; Shamsuddin, Head Constable, Computer Wing, DPO, Koppal; Y Shankar, Head Constable, City Intelligence, Bengaluru; Alankar Rakesh Ravina Siddappa, Head Constable, Office of the Commissioner of Police, Kalaburagi. *—Salar*

LULU HONOURS VETERANS

This Independence Day, Lulu Mall Rajajinagar unveiled its permanent Wall of Fame, honouring India's armed forces and veterans. Featuring the Kargil War Memorial Model and inspiring stories, it's open for two months. Regional Director Shereef KK calls it "a promise that courage and sacrifice will never be forgotten." Visit to pay tribute

ONLY 1 IN PVT HOSPITALS

Koppal govt hospitals saw 1,254 infant deaths in 3yrs

YOHAN P HONADDI
KOPPAL, 14 AUG

Barring one death, government hospitals accounted for all of the 1,254 deaths of newborn babies in Koppal district over the past three years. Similarly, government hospitals accounted for all but one of the 45 mothers who died during childbirth over the past three years in the district.

The issue came to light during the Question Hour on Monday of the Legislative Council, when Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao responded to a question from MLC Hemalatha Nayak.

"In relation to maternal and infant deaths in government hospitals across the State, notices have been issued to 11 doctors four in Kalaburagi, two in Ramanagara, and others in Davangere, Yadgir, Tumakuru, Shivamogga, and Bengaluru Rural districts," Gundu Rao said. "The doctors have provided explanations, and action is underway. A neutral investigation process is in place for such incidents. The State-level Maternal Death Review Committee analysed 530 maternal deaths last year."

However, the infant mortality rate in the State has been declining, according to the 2022 Sample Registration System (SRS) report. The rate dropped from 19 per cent to 14 per cent for every 1,000 live births.

"Government hospitals lack specialist doctors. Delays in treatment are leading to tragedies. Due to the absence of obstetricians in many places, pregnant and postpartum women are forced to suffer," Shankar Surala a resident from Koppal, told SALAR NEWS. "The shortage of doctors in primary, community, taluk, and district hospitals must be addressed. Effective health awareness programs are necessary in rural areas."

Koppal District Health and Family Welfare Officer Dr Lingaraj told SALAR NEWS that these deaths are preventable with proper medical care and attention during delivery.

CHILD MARRIAGES

According to the Department of Women and Child Development, there were a total of 1,419 child marriages in the State in 2023–24 and 2024–25 — 719 cases in 2023–24 and 700 in 2024–25. From April to June 2025 alone, 211 child marriage cases were reported.

Over the last two years, Chitradurga and Shivamogga districts reported the highest numbers — 158 each — while Gadag and Uttara Kannada recorded the lowest, with only three cases each.

"Child marriage, child malnutrition, and maternal anemia are serious problems. The Health Department should focus more on these," State Commission for Protection of Child Rights member Shashidhar Kosambe told SALAR NEWS. *—Salar News*

INFANT DEATHS; A TRAGEDY

Infant deaths in Koppal in past 3 years

2022–23	2023–24	2024– till day:
446	491	317

1 infant death in private hosp in 2023-24

The main causes of infant and maternal deaths in Koppal include:

- Premature deliveries
- Congestive heart disease
- Asphyxia
- Congestive heart failure

The Health Department suggested these preventing maternal deaths, including:

- Screening for high-risk factors during all antenatal visits.
- Collecting detailed current and past obstetric, medical, and surgical histories from pregnant women.
- Providing iron-folic acid (IFA) and calcium tablets during prenatal and postnatal periods.
- Detecting anemia, hypertension, and abnormal blood glucose levels.
- Screening for infections like HIV, tuberculosis, hepatitis, syphilis, and asymptomatic bacteriuria during pregnancy.

PHOTO: PTI

Plea in defamation withdrawn over 'threat' to Rahul

PUNE, 14 AUG

Congress MP Rahul Gandhi's lawyer on Thursday withdrew a plea in a Pune court that alleged threats to the opposition leader from followers of Hindutva ideologue Vinayak Damodar Savarkar. Advocate Milind Pawar said the application filed in connection with a defamation case brought by Savarkar's grand-nephew Satyaki Savarkar, was submitted without Gandhi's consent and had been met with his strong objection. The defamation complaint concerns remark Gandhi allegedly made in London about Savarkar, which the complainant claims are false. The plea cited hostility linked to Savarkar's ideology and the complainant's lineage, but Gandhi distanced himself from its contents. The court has already granted Gandhi bail in the case. *—PTI*

ABVP clashes with SFI over Kerala Guv directive

KASARAGOD, 14 AUG

Kerala Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar's directive for state universities to observe Partition Horrors Remembrance Day on 14 August sparked clashes at a government college. Acting on Union Home Ministry instructions, the Governor urged vice-chancellors to hold seminars, but the Left-led state government rejected the order, and the Congress-led UDF also opposed it, calling it divisive. On Thursday, RSS-affiliated ABVP activists marked the day by putting up posters, prompting CPI(M)-backed SFI members to tear down the posters, and clash with ABVP. Police intervened to break up the fight. SFI members also burnt an effigy of the Governor. Both the Left and UDF accused the move of promoting political division. *—PTI*

Conservancy workers removed over protest

CHENNAI, 14 AUG

Police in Chennai late on Wednesday dispersed conservancy workers protesting outside Ripon Buildings, the headquarters of the Chennai Corporation. The action followed a Madras High Court remark earlier in the day, expressing hope that pavements and roads would not be blocked in the name of protests. The workers, opposing the privatisation of sanitation services in areas including Tondiarpet (covering Corporation Zones 5 and 6), had been demonstrating since 1 August. Officers physically removed them and transported them by vehicle to other locations. The move drew sharp criticism from opposition leaders, with AIADMK chief and Leader of the Opposition Edappadi K Palaniswami and TVK founder-actor Vijay condemning the government's handling of the agitation. *—PTI*

TDP wins ZPTC bypoll in Andhra Pradesh

AMARAVATI, 14 AUG

A political shock has rocked Andhra Pradesh as the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) asserted its strength in Pulivendula, a stronghold of the YS family for more than four decades. The YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) suffered a heavy defeat in the Pulivendula ZPTC by-election, with TDP candidate Mareddy Latha Reddy, wife of B Tech Ravi, winning by a massive margin of 6,050 votes. The bypolls for Pulivendula and Vontimitta Zilla Parishad Territorial Constituencies were held on 12 August. Of the 8,103 votes cast, Latha Reddy secured 6,735, while YSRCP candidate Hemanth Reddy managed only 685, losing his deposit. The YSRCP candidate failed to reach even a thousand votes. *—PTI*

Don't use dirty words like vote chori: EC

EC again asks Oppn parties for proof; says 'one person, one vote' exists since 1951

NEW DELHI, 14 AUG

Amid relentless attacks by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi over alleged voter data fudging, the Election Commission on Thursday said instead of creating false narrative by using "dirty phrases" like 'vote chori', proof should be given.

In a statement, the EC said the law for "one person one vote" is already is existence since the first elections in 1951-1952.

The poll authority said that by trying to create a false narrative by using "dirty phrases" like "vote chori" for Indian electors, is not only a direct attack on the crores of Indian electors but also an assault on the integrity of lakhs of election staff.

Gandhi, the Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha, last week cited data to allege that more than one lakh votes were 'stolen' in the Mahadevpura assembly constituency of Bengaluru Central Lok Sabha in the 2024 elections, resulting in the defeat of a Congress candidate. Gandhi along with RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav and other Mahagathbandhan leaders will embark on the 'Voter Adhikar Yatra' across Bihar on 17 August.

Congress' media and publicity department head Pawan Khera urged the EC and Anurag Thakur to make the electronic voter list data of Varanasi public since he has access to it.

Congress leadership in Kerala's Wayanad disputed the BJP's claim that voters of multiple religions are registered in a house named "Chaunderi" in Kalpetta, saying BJP referred to the name of a place where may homes share the same name. *—PTI*

AICC Secretary Mansoor Ali Khan speaks at a candlelight protest against alleged 'vote theft' in Freedom Park, Bengaluru, on Thursday. It was organised by KPCC & Bangalore District Cong Committees ***PHOTO: SALAR***

EC NOTICE TO NDA MP & HUSBAND FOR HAVING 2 VOTER CARDS

PATNA, 14 AUG

- Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) MP and her husband have been asked to respond by 16 August.

EC Serves Notices to Vaishali MP and JD(U) MLC Husband Over Dual Voter ID Allegations

The Election Commission has issued notices to Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) MP for Vaishali, Veena Devi, and her husband, JD(U) MLC Dinesh Singh, over allegations that each holds two voter ID (EPIC) cards. They have been asked to respond by 16 August.

RJD leader and Bihar Assembly Opposition Leader Tejashwi Yadav alleged that Veena Devi possesses EPIC cards UT01134543 and GSB1037894, registered in different constituencies with differing ages, while Dinesh Singh holds REM0933267 and UT01134527. He accused the EC of "fraud and collusion" to benefit the NDA.

Veena Devi denied wrongdoing, stating she is only registered in the Sahebganj assembly seat and attributing the Muzaffarpur entry to an administrative error. She has requested deletion of the duplicate record.

The EC inquiry is ongoing, following allegations against Muzaffarpur Mayor. *—PTI*

Ballots poured with acid during Nehru's rule: BJP

The BJP on Thursday criticised Congress over alleged electoral malpractices during the tenures of former prime ministers Nehru, Indira Gandhi, and Rajiv Gandhi. Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat claimed nitric acid was poured into ballot boxes in 1952, and alleged booth capturing occurred under Indira and Rajiv Gandhi. The remarks came after Rahul Gandhi accused the Election Commission of "vote theft" during Bihar's Special Intensive Revision, with EC asking him to provide evidence or apologise. *—Agencies*

'RECKLESS WARMONGERING'

Temper war rhetoric or face consequences: India warns Pakistan

NEW DELHI, 14 AUG

India on Thursday hit out at Pakistan over recent nuclear war threats by its Army Chief, cautioning that any misadventure would have "painful consequences" as demonstrated in the past.

"We have seen several statements and reports regarding the continuing pattern of reckless warmongering and hateful comments from Pakistani leadership against India," Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said during the weekly briefing.

"Pakistan would be well advised to temper its rhetoric as any misadventure will have painful consequences, as was demonstrated recently," he added, referring to India's 'Operation Sindoor' after the deadly attack on innocent civilians in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam.

This comes after Pakistan Army Chief Asim Munir,

Randhir Jaiswal ***PHOTO: ANI***

during his second and recent visit to the United States, threatened India with nuclear war, warning that Islamabad could plunge the region into a catastrophic conflict and "take almost half of the world" down if faced with an existential threat in future.

"It is a well-known modus operandi of Pakistani leadership to whip up anti-India rhetoric time and again to hide their own failures," Jaiswal said. Earlier this week, India had slammed remarks of Pakistani Chief of Army Staff during his visit to the US in which he had made nuclear threat. *–ANI*

'Tariffs to rise if Trump-Putin talks fail'

NEW YORK, 14 AUG

President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin ***PHOTO: ANI***

US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent has cautioned that secondary tariffs on India could escalate if "things don't go well" during the upcoming discussions between US President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin in Alaska this Friday. Last week, Trump announced a 50 per cent tariff on India, including a 25 per cent charge on the country's purchases of Russian oil, set to take effect on 27 August 27.

"I think everyone has been frustrated with President Putin. We expected that he would come to the table in a more fulsome way. It looks like he may be ready to negotiate," Bessent told Bloomberg. He indicated that if negotiations faltered, "then sanctions or secondary tariffs could go up."

Regarding China, the major importer of Russian crude, Bessent stated, "I'm not going to get ahead of the President... but he will make it clear to President Putin that all options are on the table." He emphasised that European allies "need to join us" in potentially imposing secondary sanctions.

> **We are definitely living in a volatile and uncertain era, having experienced the successive impact of the Covid pandemic, of multiple conflicts, many of which are still going on, and of trade upheavals**
>
> -S Jaishankar, External Affairs Minister

In response, India's Ministry of External Affairs described the tariffs as "unjustified and unreasonable," asserting that India will take necessary measures to protect its national interests and economic security. *–PTI*

Op Sindoor is a historic stand against terror: Prez Murmu

NEW DELHI, 14 AUG

President Droupadi Murmu praised the nation's response to the recent Pahalgham terrorist attack in Kashmir during her address on the eve of the 79th Independence Day. She highlighted the success of Operation Sindoor, asserting it exemplifies "humanity's fight against terrorism" through the destruction of terrorist infrastructure across the border.

Condemning the "cowardly and utterly inhuman" attack on innocent citizens, Murmu commended the armed forces for their "strategic clarity and technical capability." She noted that, "I believe Operation Sindoor will go down in history as an example in humanity's fight against terrorism."

Murmu emphasised that the nation's unity serves as the most effective response to

Droupadi Murmu ***PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA***

divisive elements, referencing multi-party efforts to articulate India's stance on cross-border terrorism. "We will not be the aggressor, but we will not hesitate to retaliate in defence of our citizens," she stated.

The President celebrated India's strides towards self-reliance in defence as part of the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' initiative. "Our indigenous manufacturing has achieved critical levels... These are landmark achievements in India's defence history since Independence," she said.

Furthermore, she called for a "zero tolerance for corruption," invoking Mahatma Gandhi's words, and urged citizens to support Indian products through initiatives like 'Make-in-India'.

Addressing advancements in technology, particularly in artificial intelligence, Murmu remarked, "As we aspire to become a global AI hub by 2047, our focus will remain on improving governance for common people."

Reflecting on India's journey since 1947, she expressed optimism for the future, believing that the nation is "moving ahead at a faster pace towards realising its true potential." *—PTI*

PM Modi, Shah remember Partition Day horrors

NEW DELHI, 14 AUG

On Partition Horrors Remembrance Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi underscored the nation's duty to enhance the bonds of harmony uniting India. Reflecting on this "tragic chapter of our history," he highlighted the suffering of millions. Modi paid tribute to the resilience of those who endured Partition, asserting, "It is also a day to honour their grit."

Union Home Minister Amit Shah also expressed condolences for the affected, blaming the Congress for dividing the nation and undermining the pride of Maa Bharti (Mother India). He said, "The Partition led to violence, exploitation and atrocities... the country will never forget this history and pain." Since 2021, Modi's government has designated 14 August as a day to remember sacrifices. *—PTI*

'India would not have got freedom without Bengal'

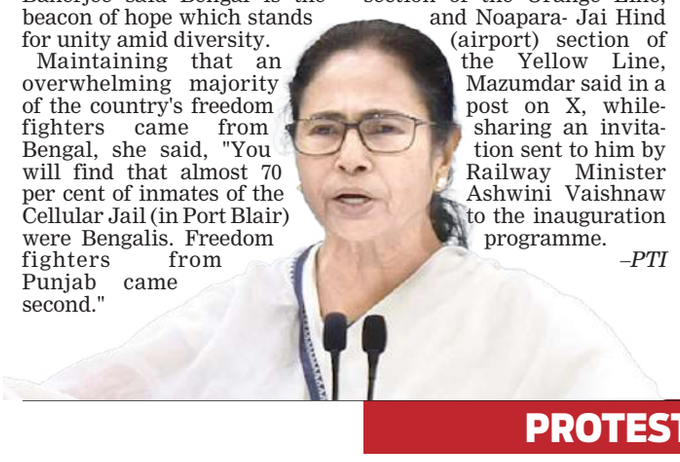
KOLKATA, 14 AUG

- Maintaining that an overwhelming majority of freedom fighters came from Bengal, she said, "You will find that almost 70 per cent of inmates of the Cellular Jail were Bengalis. Freedom fighters from Punjab came second."

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday said India would not have got Independence if Bengal was not there, as personalities like Rabindranath Tagore and Subhas Chandra Bose, who contributed significantly to shaping the nation's destiny, were born here, while Union Minister Sukanta Majumdar said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate three metro projects in Kolkata on 22 August.

Speaking at a function marking the 12th anniversary of the 'Kanyashree' scheme, Banerjee said Bengal is the beacon of hope which stands for unity amid diversity.

Maintaining that an overwhelming majority of the country's freedom fighters came from Bengal, she said, "You will find that almost 70 per cent of inmates of the Cellular Jail (in Port Blair) were Bengalis. Freedom fighters from Punjab came second."



Meanwhile, Modi will inaugurate the Sealdah-Esplanade section of the Green Line, Hemanta Mukhopadhyay (Ruby Crossing)-Beleghata section of the Orange Line, and Noapara- Jai Hind (airport) section of the Yellow Line, Mazumdar said in a post on X, while-sharing an invitation sent to him by Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw to the inauguration programme. *–PTI*

'YOGI BURIED HUSBAND'S KILLER'

SP MLA expelled for praising UP CM

LUCKNOW, 14 AUG

- In a letter issued to the MLA, the party accused Pal of indulging in activities against its interests despite repeated warnings. A copy of the letter was marked to the speaker of the legislative assembly.

SP MLA Pooja Pal who thanked Yogi Adityanath ***PHOTO: ANI***

The Samajwadi Party on Thursday expelled its MLA Pooja Pal for alleged anti-party activities, hours after she praised Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in the assembly for putting gangster-politician Atiq Ahmad to dust.

In a letter issued to the MLA, the party accused Pal of indulging in activities against its interests despite repeated warnings.

A copy of the letter, which was undersigned by SP President Akhilesh Yadav, was also marked to the speaker of the legislative assembly. The letter's copy leaked on social media, with SP sources confirming to PTI the expulsion.

Deputy CM Brajesh Pathak termed the expulsion as SP's "anti-women approach".

The letter said that Pal's actions amounted to "serious indiscipline" and that she was being removed from all party posts with immediate effect.

The expulsion came within hours after of Pal making the remarks in the Monsoon session, where she thanked Yogi for "ensuring justice" in the murder of her husband, former Bahujan Samaj Party MLA Raju Pal, who was gunned down in 2005 in Prayagraj in an attack linked to Atiq Ahmad. *–PTI*

PROTESTS LIKELY

Meat sale: Security tightened in Kalyan

THANE, 14 AUG

Security has been stepped up in Kalyan area here as some political parties and butcher associations have warned of a protest against the local civic body's order for closure of meat shops and abattoirs on Independence Day.

Various municipal corporations in Maharashtra, including Kalyan-Dombivli (in Thane district), Nagpur, Nashik, Malegaon and Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar, issued orders directing closure of slaughterhouses and

meat shops on 15 August.

These facilities will remain shut on certain other days too, in view of Hindu and Jain festivals.

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis earlier said the government was not interested in policing people's food choices.

Security has been heightened in the Kalyan-Dombivli civic limits and the police were monitoring the situation to avert any eventuality.

Certain political parties have warned of agitation in the Kalyan Dombivli Municipal Corporation's vicinity, including putting up meat stalls, selling meat and organising gatherings. Such people will be served notice, police sources said.

The police may issue prohibitory orders to maintain law and order.

Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar has questioned the closure, while BJP, defended the move saying civic bodies were empowered to impose such restrictions. Opposition parties also criticised the move. NCP (SP) MLA Jitendra Awhad said he would host a mutton party on tha day. *—PTI*

Joyalukkas, the world's favourite jeweller, inaugurated its grand new showroom in Cuttack in the presence of Sofia Firdous, MLA Barabati-Cuttack; celebrity guest Malvika Sharma; cine actresses Poonam Mishra and Anisha Sharma; and Executive Director of Joyalukkas Thomas Mathew, along with other dignitaries. ***PHOTO: SALAR***

PHOTO: PTI

Vague: SC on plea to return jumbos from Vantara

NEW DELHI, 14 AUG

Supreme Court on Thursday termed as "completely vague" a plea seeking to constitute a monitoring committee to return the captive elephants in Vantara, a wildlife rescue and rehabilitation centre for wild animals. A bench of Justices Pankaj Mithal and PB Varale told advocate CR Jaya Sukin, petitioner in person, that he was making allegations against Vantara without even adding them as party. The top court asked petitioner to implead Vantara in the petition.—*PTI*

2 Babbar Khalsa International operatives arrested

CHANDIGARH, 14 AUG

Punjab Police say they have foiled a major terror plot by Pakistan-based Babbar Khalsa International (BKI) operative Harwinder Singh Rinda. Acting on intelligence, Counter Intelligence in Ferozepur arrested two BKI operatives accused of planning grenade attacks on government establishments. Police chief Gaurav Yadav said the suspects were working under the direction of handlers in the UK, USA and Europe, with backing from Pakistan's ISI. Officers seized two hand grenades, a Beretta 9mm pistol and live cartridges. Rinda, a wanted militant operating from Pakistan, is believed to have coordinated the plot as part of a wider Khalistani network. Authorities said the arrests averted a potentially high-impact attack and investigations are under way.—*PTI*

PHOTO: X/SUNPICTURES

Rajinikanth's 'Coolie' releases amid celebrations

CHENNAI, 14 AUG

Superstar Rajinikanth's much-anticipated film 'Coolie' released across Tamil Nadu on Thursday, coinciding with the legend's 50 years in cinema. Directed by Lokesh Kanagaraj and produced by Sun Pictures, the star-studded revenge drama features Aamir Khan, Nagarjuna, Upendra, Sathyaraj and Shruti Haasan, with music by Anirudh. Fans thronged cinemas for the first day, first show, celebrating with drums, dancing and fireworks. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin attended a special screening, while actors Dhanush and Sivakarthikeyan joined audiences on release day. The song Monica, featuring Malayalam actor Shoubin, has gone viral. Kanagaraj called Coolie "special" and thanked Rajinikanth for the collaboration. —*PTI*

Tricolour to unfurl in 14 villages for 1st time

RAIPUR, 14 AUG

For the first time since India's independence, fourteen remote villages in Chhattisgarh's Naxal-affected Bastar region will host the national flag this Independence Day. New security force camps in Bijapur, Narayanpur and Sukma districts have brought safety and confidence, replacing decades of fear under insurgent influence. Locals are enthusiastically preparing, with children rehearsing patriotic songs and elders helping ready the grounds. The Bastar police chief hailed it as a historic milestone, crediting sustained security operations for reducing black flag protests to near zero. Additional forces are ensuring safe celebrations. The events symbolise not only restored peace, but also the growing trust between villagers, the administration and security personnel.—*PTI*

SC refuses to stay detention of Bengali-speaking migrants

Asks what if an infiltrator enters India, seeks Centre's reply

NEW DELHI, 14 AUG

The PIL raised alleged systemic and arbitrary detention of migrant workers and labourers specially from Bengal by various other states PHOTO: PTI

The Supreme Court on Thursday agreed to hear a PIL alleging detention of Bengali-speaking migrant workers on suspicion of being Bangladeshi nationals.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and Joymalya Bagchi, however, refused to pass any interim order with regard to the detention, saying any order will have consequences especially with respect to people, who genuinely came from across the borders.

"States where these migrant workers are working have the right to inquire from their state of origin about their bonafide but the problem is in the interregnum. If we pass any interim orders, then it will have consequences, especially those who have illegally come from across the border and need to be deported under the law. If someone enters illegally, detaining may be necessary; otherwise they could disappear before verification," the bench said.

It asked advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for petitioner West Bengal Migrant Welfare Board, to wait till the Centre and nine states – Odisha, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Delhi, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Haryana and West Bengal -- filed their responses.

Bhushan alleged harassment of people by the states only because they were Bengali speaking and possessed documents in the language on the basis of a circular issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).

Bhushan said some deported persons were brought back after verification but he flagged the arbitrary enforcement of the MHA order.

The bench said some mechanism was required to be developed to ensure genuine citizens were not harassed.

Justice Kant suggested the presence of a nodal agency to coordinate between home and work states and help in establishing the bonafide of the migrant workers.

Justice Bagchi said the scale of migration from eastern states to the northern and southern states was "too much" and a nodal agency could help in managing the verification process. The PIL raised alleged systemic and arbitrary detention of migrant workers and labourers specially from West Bengal by various other states.

Additionally, Justice Kant gave a stern message on the issue saying, "We cannot overlook ground realities. Suppose someone is an Infiltrator and he enters illegally. How to deal with that situation? If you don't detain, the writing on the wall is that they will disappear." —*PTI with Agencies*

People stand near mortal remains of victims of the cloudburst, in Kishtwar district of J&K; ITBP personnel rescue stranded Kailash Yatra pilgrims from cloudburst-hit Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh PHOTO: PTI

TIRANGA MARCH

In a spectacular display, villagers, students, Army and ITBP personnel participate in a 'Tiranga Rally' ahead of Independence Day in Tawang district in Arunachal Pradesh PHOTO: PTI

ED freezes Rs 110 cr bank funds in illegal betting

NEW DELHI, 14 AUG

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has frozen Rs 110 crore held in mule bank accounts and seized over 1,200 mule credit cards following recent searches of the Indian operations of Parimatch, a Cyprus-based online betting platform accused of illegal activities.

The ED stated that Parimatch gained traction in India through "aggressive" marketing, including sponsorship deals with sports tournaments and partnerships with high-profile celebrities. Allegations suggest the platform has defrauded investors by promising high returns, generating upwards of Rs 3,000 crore in a year.

They had set up Indian entities to run surrogate advertisements under the names 'Parimatch Sports' and 'Parimatch News'. —*PTI*

1 dead in Andhra rains; Cloudbursts in Himachal

VIJAYWADA, 14 AUG

Heavy rains lashed Andhra Pradesh's Vijayawada, leaving several areas waterlogged, while a 51-year-old man died after accidentally falling into an underground drainage.

According to the Vijayawada Municipal Corporation, drainage cleaning work was underway near Gulammohiddin Street when the man, T Madhusudhana Rao, fell into it as the area was inundated.

The downpour, which began on the night of 12 August, caused water levels to rise nearly three feet above road level, flooding several localities.

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu has directed officials to take precautionary measures and monitor sudden flood inflows from streams and rivulets in the Krishna River basin.

Heavy rains were forecast in several districts of the state.

Residents in and around the Krishna River basin were advised to avoid travel, swimming and fishing.

Meanwhile, cloudbursts and flash floods in Shimla, Kullu, Kinnaur and Lahaul and Spiti districts of Himachal Pradesh caused massive destruction, with 396 roads closed for traffic, houses damaged, vehicles washed away and some panchayats in Shimla cut off.

A yellow for heavy rain was sounded at isolated places in the state till 20 August.

The Army rescued four people, including one injured, in Kinnaur district.

A massive tree uprooted and fell on vehicles in Delhi's Kalkaji area amid rains on Thursday morning, killing a 50-year-old man, while his daughter battled for life at a hospital. —*PTI*

Shilpa Shetty, hubby booked for duping man of Rs 60 cr

MUMBAI, 14 AUG

Mumbai Police have registered a case against actor Shilpa Shetty and her husband Raj Kundra, alleging that they duped businessman Deepak Kothari of Rs 60.4 crore in a loan-cum-investment scheme involving their defunct company, Best Deal TV Private Limited.

Kothari claimed he was introduced to the couple by Rajesh Arya and provided a loan disguised as an investment to avoid higher taxation. Over time, he transferred Rs 31.9 crore in April 2015 and Rs 28.53 crore in September 2015, allegedly for business expansion. Kothari claimed he discovered insolvency proceedings against the company in 2017 and accused the couple of diverting funds for personal use.

The couple's lawyer described the allegations as "baseless and malicious," asserting that the case is civil in nature and has already been adjudicated by the NCLT Mumbai. all necessary documents had been provided to the Economic Offences Wing. The investment agreement, according to the lawyer, was purely an equity investment related to a company that had entered liquidation. —*PTI*

DMK fumes as Governor flags social issues in Tamil Nadu

CHENNAI, 14 AUG

PHOTO: PTI

Tensions between the Tamil Nadu government and Governor RN Ravi resurfaced on Thursday as the Governor, in his address on the eve of the 79th Independence Day, highlighted four "very serious challenges" facing the State: educational and social discrimination, rising suicides, growing drug abuse among youth, and a surge in crimes against women and children.

In a show of protest, Chief Minister MK Stalin announced he would not attend the Independence Day tea party hosted by the Governor. Citing ASER data, Governor Ravi said learning outcomes in Tamil Nadu's government schools are "far lower than the national average," and the public education ecosystem is in steady decline. He stressed that marginalised students were receiving certificates without real employment opportunities, deepening social and economic inequality.

Referring to NCRB data, he noted Tamil Nadu's suicide rate stands at over 26 per lakh population—more than double the national average—indicating acute social, psychological, and economic distress. He further warned of a sharp rise in drug abuse, especially synthetic drugs, with 14-fold increase in seizures in 2024. Over 2,000 people, mostly youth, are reportedly dying by suicide annually due to substance abuse.

Crimes against women and children have also seen a disturbing rise, with POCSO-related rape cases up by 56 per cent and molestation cases increasing by 33 per cent in 2024.

Despite these challenges, the Governor praised Tamil Nadu's economic and infrastructure development, noting that the State remains one of India's top six economic performers. —*PTI*

UP teen dies of cardiac arrest while practising for race

BAHRAICH, 14 AUG

A 15-year-old boy tragically died while training for a race at Sa'aadat Inter College in Nanpara, Bahraich district, on Wednesday. Himanshu, a ninth-grade student from Bhaggapurwa village, collapsed after completing a 100-metre sprint alongside classmates in preparation for Independence Day celebrations. Witnesses reported he finished third but fell unconscious shortly after crossing the line.

Dr. Suresh Verma at the local health centre declared him brought dead, suggesting cardiac arrest as a potential cause, although this will be confirmed postmortem. Himanshu's elder brother, Shivam, alleged negligence, claiming the race was held in scorching heat without immediate medical assistance, stating, "If he had been taken to hospital in time, his life might have been saved." College principal Arvind Mishra confirmed efforts were made to revive him. —*PTI*

INDIA'S SAMUDRAYAN

Aquanauts dive 5,000 metres into ocean

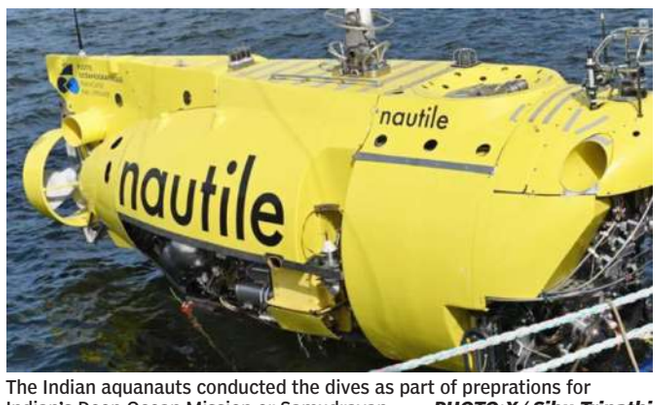
NEW DELHI, 14 AUG

Around a month after Shubhanshu Shukla became the first Indian to reach the International Space Station, India sent an aquanaut 5,000 metres deep into the ocean in a first-of-its-kind expedition earlier this month.

Conducted in partnership with France, two Indian aquanauts successfully completed one deep dive each in the North Atlantic Ocean in the French submersible "Nautile" on as part of preparations for India's ambitious Deep Ocean Mission or 'Samudrayaan,'

Raju Ramesh, a scientist at the National Institute of Ocean Technology, went 4,025 metres down on 5 August, followed by a deep dive of 5,002 metres by Indian Navy Commander (retd) Jatinder Pal Singh on 6 August.

Union Earth Sciences Minister Jitendra Singh India ventured into space and the deep ocean almost simultaneously.



The Indian aquanauts conducted the dives as part of preprations for Indian's Deep Ocean Mission or Samudrayan PHOTO:X/ Sibu Tripathi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has taken a keen interest in the Deep Ocean Mission and blue economy.

India will conduct such dives before a deep dive in the indigenous Matsya 6000 submersible around December 2027.

Samudrayan, implemented by the Ministry of Earth Sciences, involves the development of crewed and uncrewed submersibles, deep-sea mining technologies, ocean climate services, biodiversity research and energy from the ocean, aimed at harnessing resources from India's Exclusive Economic Zone and continental shelf.

The Matsya 6000 is designed to carry three people to depths of 6,000 metres inside a 2.1-metre-diameter titanium alloy sphere capable of withstanding extreme pressures.

The Matsya 6000 is equipped with scientific sensors, data and voice communication systems and safety subsystems with emergency endurance of up to 96 hours. —*PTI*

Ethnic groups ask 'illegal settlers' to leave Assam

DIBRUGARH, 14 AUG

Supporting Assam government's steps to evict alleged encroachments from various forests, several ethnic organisations have started 'Miya Kheda Andolan' (movement to drive out Miyas) in many districts of the state.

The 'Miya Kheda Andolan' has gained momentum in Upper Assam districts, with local groups accusing the 'Miya' settlers of encroaching on their ancestral lands and forests and threatening the very essence of Assamese identity by undermining the political and economic rights of the indigenous population.

"Illegal Bangladeshi Muslims must be deported from Assam....," All Tai Ahom Students' Union president Milan Buragohain said. ATASU and Bir Lachit Sena held rallies for the cause—*PTI*

Assam launches portal for arms licence application

GUWAHATI, 14 AUG

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has launched a digital portal for indigenous residents in remote, "sensitive" areas to apply for arms licences. Aimed at aiding law and order, the scheme targets those without criminal records, who are mentally sound, and can prove vulnerability. Applicants will undergo training and strict vetting, with licences granted under the Indian Arms Act. The measure seeks to empower communities facing demographic change, enabling them to act as first responders until police arrive. —*PTI*

FREEDOM STRUGGLE: Recalling BENGALURU'S ROLE

As India celebrates yet another Independence Day, we turn our gaze not to the distant corridors of Delhi or the battlefields of colonial resistance, but to the streets and spaces of Namma Bengaluru, which witnessed history being made during the years of the Freedom Struggle. Seen as a hub of technology and innovation, the City holds within it silent witnesses to the country's turbulent path to freedom — parks where speeches stirred hearts, schools where minds were shaped, mills where workers rose in protest, and forts that bore the scars of war.

This Independence Day, Salar News walks you through the forgotten, yet familiar corners of Bengaluru that played a vital role in India's freedom movement.

FREEDOM PARK, SESHADRI ROAD

Freedom Park, once the Central Jail built by the British in 1866. During the 1975 Emergency, leaders like Atal Behari Vajpayee and LK Advani were imprisoned here.

The park opened to the public in November 2008 as a museum and memorial and features an art gallery, information corridor, and retains prison elements like barracks, watchtower, hanging area, and hospital, offering a glimpse into jail life and India's struggle for freedom. A section is now designated for protests. In more recent times it also hosted Anna Hazare's India Against Corruption fast.

A TRYST WITH DESTINY

At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom. A moment comes, which comes but rarely in history, when we step out from the old to the new, when an age ends, and when the soul of a nation, long suppressed, finds utterance.

It is fitting that at this solemn moment, we take the pledge of dedication to the service of India and her people and to the still larger cause of humanity. At the dawn of history, India started on her unending quest, and trackless centuries are filled with her striving and grandeur of her success and failures. Through good and ill fortune alike, she has never lost sight of that quest, forgotten the ideals which gave her strength.

We end today a period of misfortunes and India discovers herself again. The achievement we celebrate today is but a step, an opening of opportunity to the greater triumphs and achievements that await us. Are we brave enough and wise enough to grasp this opportunity and accept the challenge of the future? Freedom and power bring responsibility. The responsibility rests upon this Assembly, a sovereign body representing the sovereign people of India.

Before the birth of freedom, we have endured all the pains of labour and our hearts are heavy with the memory of this sorrrow. Some of those pains continue even now.

Nevertheless, the past is over and it is the future that beckons us now. That future is not one of ease or resting but of incessant striving so that we may fulfill the pledges we have so often taken and the one we shall take today....

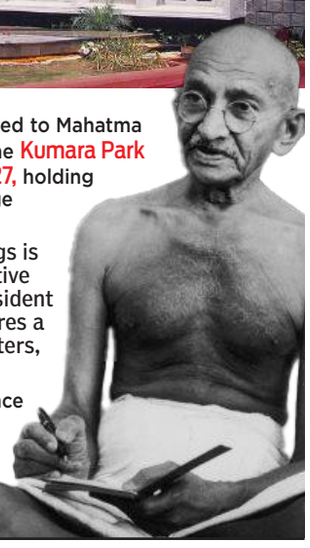
Jawaharlal Nehru, first Prime Minister

GANDHI BHAVAN, KUMARA PARK EAST

Gandhi Bhavan is a museum dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhiji stayed nearby at the Kumara Park guest house for three months in 1927, holding daily prayer meetings that drew large crowds.

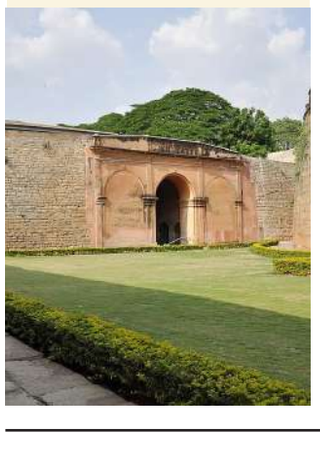
The spot where he sat for gatherings is now preserved with a commemorative plaque. Inaugurated in 1965 by President S Radhakrishnan, the Bhavan features a gallery of rare photographs and letters, a library, and an auditorium.

It houses Karnataka's largest reference library on Gandhian thought, with over 10,000 books in Kannada, English, and Hindi, promoting Gandhian values and Sarvodaya literature.



Bangalore Fort, Krishna Rajendra Rd

Nicknamed the 'Abode of Happiness', Bangalore Fort was originally built in 1537 by Kempe Gowda using mud-mortar. It was expanded during Chikkadeva Raya Wodeyar's reign (1673–1704), and later rebuilt in stone by Hyder Ali in 1761. Tipu Sultan further strengthened the structure. In March 1791, during the Third Mysore War, the British East India Company, alongside the Marathas and the Nizam, besieged the fort. Despite fierce resistance led by Commandant Bahadur Khan, in which over 2,000 Mysore soldiers died, the British breached the Delhi Gate on 21 March. The breach in the fort is how the British entered South India. The fort's capture provided a strategic base to attack Srirangapatna, the then capital. Once spanning a kilometre with 26 towers and a wide ditch, only the Delhi Gate and two bastions remain today. A marble plaque marks the breach site. The area also houses Tipu Sultan's Summer Palace and armoury.



BANAPPA PARK, NAGARATHPETE

The park has been a hub for public movements since the freedom struggle. It is said that Mahatma Gandhi gave speeches here. In 1937, police action during a speech by Congress leader KF Nariman led to protests and police firing which resulted in the death of several people. In 1939, poet and Dalit activist T Siddalingaiah began satyagraha here and was jailed for a year. The park saw major gatherings during the Quit India Movement in 1942. Now overshadowed by traffic, it houses a black granite stupa with a spinning wheel, symbolising Gandhiji's ideals and serving as a memorial to freedom fighters.

BINNY MILLS

The mill strikes in Bengaluru were critical to the freedom movement, and still serve as the backbone for labour unions today. In 1921, workers at the Binny Mills (set up in 1884) organised their first strike, a few years after the end of World War 1. With growing working-class solidarity, mill workers launched the largest strike of that year in response to the Mysore State increasing their working hours but lowering their wages. Police opened fire and some people died in the protests. In 1929, various mill organisations under the Bangalore Textile Trade Union began mobilising workers and launched several strikes, most notably in 1938 and 1941. The demonstrations resulted in the 1941 Mysore Labour (Emergency) Act, which legalised unions and set a redressal system in place.

NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, BASAVANAGUDI

The National High School (NHS) in Basavanagudi was founded in 1917 by Annie Besant —an English socialist, theosophist, and educationist who championed Indian self-rule, and became the first female president of the Indian National Congress. NHS played a vital role in the freedom movement, hosting several independence activists. Freedom fighter Hanumanthappa Narasimhaiah translated Gandhiji's speeches into Kannada here. Gandhiji visited the school multiple times and is remembered for saying the site would be "very, very red" on a map of places he loved.

MYSORE BANK CIRCLE

On 9 August, 1942, a day after Mahatma Gandhi launched the Quit India Movement, hundreds gathered for a mass demonstration amid heavy police security. Violence ensued resulting in lathi charge and firing by the police in which at least four people were killed. Thousands rallied at the Mysore Bank Circle over the next few days, as the Quit India Movement officially took off. While historians believe that the actual death toll may be higher, there is a plaque at the circle with the names of the four deceased.

QUDDUS SAHEB EIDGAH, CANTONMENT

Mahatma Gandhi addressed a gathering of 40,000 people on 11 August, 1920 at the height of the Khilafat Movement at the Quddus Saheb Eidgah. During his address, he called for religious harmony and national unity, laying the ground work for the Non-Corporation Movement that would be launched in September that year. In 1921, two Khilafat workers were killed in army firing in Cantonment. When the Civil Disobedience movement began in 1932, workers launched a satyagraha from the Cantonment area.

THE POWER OF WORDS

The British rule which spanned for about 200 years from 1757 to 1947 was marked by several kinds of repressions and atrocities among which banning books and works of art was one.

BANNED SONGS

1. **'VANDE MATARAM':** Written by novelist and poet Bankim Chandra Chatterjee in 1882.
It is the first-ever song that represented India.
In 1950, the song was designated as the National Song of India by the Constituent Assembly.
It played an important role during the Independence movement.
Public performance of the song was considered a crime.

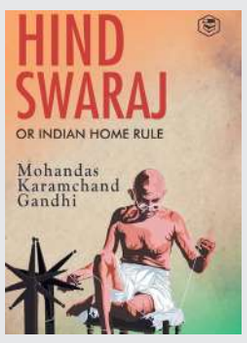
2. **'Varika Varika Sahajare'**
Written by poet, journalist and freedom fighter Amsi Narayanapilla in 1930. The song was written for the Salt Satyagraha in Kerala. The group that had gathered for the Salt March sang the song the whole way. The governments of Travancore, Cochin, and Malaba feared the ability of the song to mobilise people, leading to the ban.

3. **'Qadam Qadam Badhaye Ja'**
Written by freedom fighter and poet Vanshidhar Shukla in 1942 and composed by Ram Singh Thakuri, the song was the regimental marching song of Indian National Army under the leadership of Subhas Chandra Bose
The song was banned by the British after World War II as it was considered seditious.

4. **'Karar Oi Louho Kopat'**
Written by poet Kazi Nazrul Islam in 1922.
The song's lyrics focus on breaking free from oppressive forces, symbolized by iron bars and chains. It encourages resistance and liberation from injustice Nazrul wrote it after Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das was imprisoned in 1922.

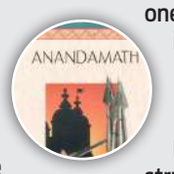
5. **'Door Hato Duniya Walo'**
Written by poet and songwriter Kavi Pradeep in 1943 for the film Kismet which was also banned by the British authorities. The song was released after the Quit India Movement, and the lyrics called out British, asking them to leave India. The song was banned after listeners realised the patriotic message behind it. The lyricist went into hiding after a sedition charge

BANNED BOOKS



1. **'HIND SWARAJ' BY MAHATMA GANDHI (1909)** It was considered seditious due to its critique of British rule and its advocacy for Indian self-rule through non-violent resistance.

2. **'ANANDAMATH' BY BANKIM CHANDRA CHATTOPADHYAY (1882)** The Bengali novel is one of the most important novels in the history of Indian literature. The book shows the struggle and survival of a couple during Bengal's famine.



3. **'THE INDIAN STRUGGLE' BY SUBHASH CHANDRA BOSE (1942)** It details the period from the Non-Cooperation and Khilafat Movements to the Quit India Movement and the Azad Hind movement. The book was initially banned in India by the British and published in 1948, after India gained Independence.

4. **'NETAJI KE SAATHI' BY JOURNALIST IMDAD SABRI (1946)** It was dedicated to those who sacrificed their lives for India's freedom.The National Archive of India declared it as a 'rare book'.

5. **'SINDHUDO' BY JHAVERCHANAD MEGHANI (1930)** The Gujarati poems inspired youth to participate in the freedom movement. The author was jailed for 2 years.

Research: Amina Afaq, Siddharth Saldanha, Jayasree Jayaprakash, Design: Surendhar

PHOTO: UNSPLASH

WhatsApp accuses Moscow of blocking it

MOSCOW, 14 AUG

WhatsApp has accused Russia of attempting to restrict secure communication for millions by limiting calls on its platform. Russia's government claims the foreign-owned messaging apps, including WhatsApp and Telegram, are not cooperating with law enforcement regarding fraud and terrorism investigations. While text messaging and voice notes remain unaffected, the dispute has intensified since Moscow's invasion of Ukraine in 2022. WhatsApp"is private, end-to-end encrypted, and defies government attempts to violate people's right to secure communication," it said. Telegram reported that its moderators are using AI to combat harmful messages. Russia is promoting a new state-controlled app, MAX, which allegedly tracks user activities. *—Agencies*

27 migrants die in shipwreck off Italy's Lampedusa

LAMPEDUSA, 14 AUG

At least 27 migrants and refugees drowned after a shipwreck near the Italian island of Lampedusa, confirmed Filippo Grandi, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. Grandi noted, "Over 700 refugees and migrants have lost their lives in the Central Mediterranean so far in 2025," underscoring the pressing need for enhanced responses to these crises. Survivors from the wreck are being assisted by UNHCR while 20 bodies have been recovered, with an equal number missing. The International Organisation for Migration revealed that approximately 95 individuals had set off from Libya, but one boat capsized due to severe overloading after passengers were forced to switch vessels. *—ANI*

US approves $346 million weapons sale to Nigeria

ABUJA, 14 AUG

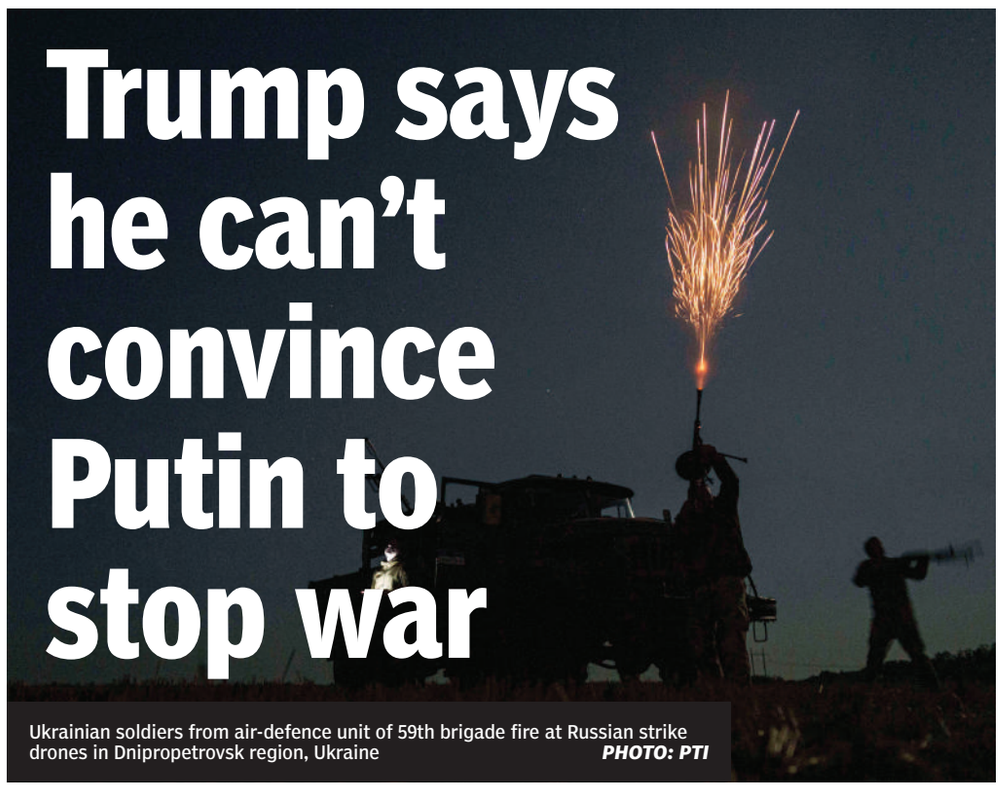
The US State Department approved a possible $346 million weapons sale to Nigeria to help improve security in the sub-Saharan country, the Pentagon said Wednesday. Congress was notified and would need to approve the sale, the Defence Security Cooperation Agency said in a statement. The weapons requested by Nigeria include munitions, bombs and rockets. A resurgence of attacks by Boko Haram, Nigeria's homegrown jihadist group, has shaken the northeast. The group took up arms in 2009 to fight Western education and impose its version of Islamic law. The conflict, which has spread into Nigeria's northern neighbours, has claimed about 35,000 civilian lives and displaced at least 2 million people, according to the UN. *—PTI*

South Korea's SC sacks 'Baby Shark' copyright claim

SEOUL, 14 AUG

South Korea's Supreme Court has rejected a 30 million won ($21,600) damage claim from American composer Jonathan Wright, who accused Pinkfong of plagiarising his version of the 'Baby Shark' song. The court upheld earlier rulings stating that Wright's composition, released in 2011, did not significantly differ from the folk tune that both versions are based on. The top court stated, "The plaintiff's song did not involve substantial modifications," affirming the status of folk tunes as derivative works. Pinkfong celebrated the ruling, asserting that their hit is based on a "traditional singalong chant." Wright's attorney described the outcome as "a little disappointing" but acknowledged that the matter is settled. *—PTI*

Trump says he can't convince Putin to stop war



Ukrainian soldiers from air-defence unit of 59th brigade fire at Russian strike drones in Dnipropetrovsk region, Ukraine **PHOTO: PTI**

Floats another meet with Putin, Zelenskyy

WASHINGTON, 14 AUG

US President Donald Trump has said it was unlikely that he could convince his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin to stop targeting civilians in Ukraine during their Friday meeting in Alaska.

When asked if he believed he could persuade Putin to halt such attacks, Trump said, "Well, I'll tell you what, I've had that conversation with him. I've had a lot of good conversations with him. Then I go home and I see that a rocket hit a nursing home or a rocket hit an apartment building and people are lying dead in the streets."

"So I guess the answer to that is no, because I've had this conversation. I want to end the war. It's Biden's war, but I want to end it. I'll be very proud to end this war, along with the five other wars I ended. But I guess the answer to that is probably no," the US President said Wednesday.

When running for office, Trump had promised to end the war within two days of assuming office.

Trump also warned Putin of "very severe consequences" if Russia doesn't agree to stop the Ukraine war after their meeting. Trump also proposed a second summit involving Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

"I would like to do it almost immediately. We will have a quick second meeting between President Putin, President Zelenskyy, and me if they would like to have me there," Trump said.

However, the US President added that this second meeting will not happen if he does not hear the answers he wants.

"There may be no second meeting because if I feel that it's not appropriate to have it because I didn't get the answers that we have to have," Trump said. *—ANI*

> **International borders cannot be, and must not be changed by force. Any talk about borders, diplomacy, ceasefire has to sit alongside a robust and credible security guarantee to ensure that any peace, if there is peace, is lasting peace and Ukraine can defend its territorial integrity as part of any deal.**
>
> —Keir Starmer, British Prime Minister

> **Everything concerning Ukraine must be discussed exclusively with Ukraine. We must prepare a trilateral format for talks. There must be a ceasefire, that is number one.... There must be security guarantees, truly reliable ones.... Russia cannot have a veto over Ukraine's European and NATO prospects**
>
> —Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Ukrainian President

> **I've had a lot of good conversations with (Putin). Then I go home and I see that a rocket hit a nursing home or a rocket hit an apartment building and people are lying dead in the streets. So I guess the answer to (whether there will be a ceasefire) is no**
>
> —Donald Trump, US President

UK PM Keir Starmer, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy **PHOTO: PTI**

Zelenskyy meets with UK's Starmer as Europe braces for Alaska summit

- Zelenskyy's trip to the British capital comes a day after he participated in virtual meetings from Berlin with US President Donald Trump and EU leaders

LONDON, 14 AUG

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer welcomed Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to London on Thursday, a day before a critical US-Russia summit in Alaska.

The two embraced warmly outside Starmer's offices at 10 Downing Street, without making any comments. Zelenskyy's trip to the British capital comes a day after he took part in virtual meetings from Berlin with US President Donald Trump and the leaders of several European countries.

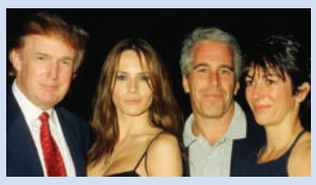
"It is important to remind colleagues that we do stand ready also to increase pressure on Russia, particularly the economy, with sanctions and wider measures as may be necessary," Starmer said ahead of the meeting.

Both Zelenskyy and the Europeans have worried that the bilateral US-Russia summit would leave them and their interests sidelined, and that any conclusions reached could favour Moscow. Yet some of those leaders, like German Chancellor Friedrich Merz and French President Emmanuel Macron, praised Wednesday's video conference with Trump as constructive.

Macron said Trump agreed that "the United States and all the parties involved should take part" of security guarantees, but the NATO military alliance will not be part of it.

"It's a very important clarification," Macron said. *—PTI*

FLOTUS to sue Hunter for Epstein claims



First Lady Melania Trump has threatened to sue Hunter Biden for over USD 1 billion for claiming that Jefferey Epstein introduced her to Donald Trump. She also put Joe Biden's son "on notice". Melania's attorney, Alejandro Brito, demanded that Hunter "immediately retract the false, defamatory, disparaging, and inflammatory statements" he made about the first lady in an interview earlier this month on the YouTube show 'Channel 5 with Andrew Callaghan.' Brito had sent a letter to Hunter and his lawyer, Abbe Lowell, on 6 August, giving him an ultimatum: remove the conten or face the lawsuit.

BRAZIL ANNOUNCES $5.5B RELIEF PLAN FOR EXPORTERS HIT BY TRUMP TARIFFS

SAO PAULO, 13 AUG

Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva announced a plan to provide credit of 20 billion reais ($5.5 billion) to exporters hit but Trump's massive 50 per cent tariffs.

Other measures in the "Sovereign Brazil" plan include postponing tax charges for businesses affected by the tariffs, while also incentivising Brazilians to buy up locally produced goods that would have otherwise been exported to the US.

"We cannot be scared, nervous and anxious when there is a crisis," Lula said. "A crisis is for us to create new things."

Other measures include postponing tax charges for companies affected by US tariffs, providing 5 billion reais (USD 930,000) in tax credits to small and medium-sized companies until the end of 2026. *—Agencies*

Homeless get jail threat as DC protests

Washington DC residents protested as Trump deployed federal law enforcement and the National Guard to the capital over an alleged increase in crime rates. Trump has also threatened to extend the emergency, saying, "We're going to be asking for extensions on that — long-term extensions, because you can't have 30 days," Trump said Wednesday. Trump had earlier asked homeless people to leave the city "immediately," although it was not clear where they were supposed to go. The White House clarified. "Homeless individuals will be given the option to leave their encampment, to be taken to a homeless shelter, to be offered addiction or mental health services, and, if they refuse, they will be susceptible to fines or to jail time," White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt said.

Israeli soldiers inspect thier tanks in south Gaza **PHOTO: X**

Israel announces West Bank occupation plan

MAALE ADUMIM/ JERUSALEM, 14 AUG

Israel's far-right finance minister announced a contentious new settlement construction in the Israeli-occupied West Bank on Thursday which Palestinians and rights groups worry will scuttle plans for a future Palestinian state by effectively cutting the West Bank into two separate parts.

"This reality finally buries the idea of a Palestinian state, because there is nothing to recognise and no one to recognise," said Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich. "Anyone in the world who tries today to recognise a Palestinian state – will receive an answer from us on the ground".

The announcement comes as many Western countries said they would recognise a Palestinian state.

Development in E1, an open tract of land east of Jerusalem, has been under consideration for more than two decades, but was frozen due to US pressure during previous administrations. Smotrich praised President Donald Trump as "true friends of Israel as we have never had before".

The plan is expected to receive final approval 20 Aug. *—PTI*

Pakistan military get detention power

ISLAMABAD/ KARACHI, 14 AUGUST

Pakistan passed the Anti-Terrorism (Amendment) Bill, 2024, restoring the provision of preventive detention for individuals suspected of terrorism, The Express Tribune reported on Tuesday. The amendment, which was passed in Assembly on Wednesday, empowers both military and civil armed forces to detain individuals suspected of terrorism for up to three months.

This power was initially provided by an amendment in 2014 to conduct preventive detention of individuals suspected of involvement in terrorism-related activities, but the amendment was subject to a sunset clause and expired after two years in 2016.

The main Opposition party, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, opposed the Amendment, terming it against basic rights. PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan branded it a violation of "fundamental human rights".

"The Supreme Court said these laws were contrary to fundamental rights," Gohar said. "You cannot touch a single person in the world without a solid reason."

The PTI feared the Bill could be used to silence dissenting voices. *—Agencies*

A man looks at a sniper rifle during a defense exhibition as part of Pakistan's Independence Day celebrations, in Islamabad **PHOTO: PTI**

3 killed during Pak Independence Day celebrations

KARACHI, 14 AUG

Three people, including a senior citizen and an 8-year-old girl, were killed during Independence Day celebrations in Pakistan's Karachi due to "reckless" gun firing, while over 64 others sustained gunshot injuries.

The incidents occurred across Karachi, with the young girl hit by a stray bullet in Azizabad.

Authorities condemned the practice as reckless and dangerous. *—Agencies*

Pakistan announces creation of new Army Rocket Force

Pakistan has announced the creation of a new force - the Army Rocket Force - equipped with advanced technology. "It is a key milestone in the advancement of the country's military response capability," Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said. Pakistan's new force is apparently inspired by China's People's Liberation Army Rocket Force, which controls arsenal of land-based ballistic, hypersonic, cruise missiles - both nuclear and conventional.

POLUTION CRISIS

Plastic treaty a dud with no cap for countries

NEW DELHI, 14 AUG

PHOTO: FREEPIK

Governments negotiating the first-ever global treaty to curb plastic pollution were handed a new draft that leaves out binding limits on plastic production, a gap that has threatened to make the talks collapse.

The text, released during the fifth round of negotiations on plastics treaty (INC-5.2) in Geneva on Tuesday, is part of efforts launched in 2022 to address what the UN calls a "plastic pollution crisis" that threatens oceans, wildlife, human health and the climate.

Scientists estimate more than 430 million tonnes of plastic is produced each year, much of it is short-lived products that become waste within months, with around 11 millions tonnes entering the ocean annually.

In a note, Chair Luis Vayas Valdivieso said the draft text "reflects my vision of a balanced outcome, carefully considering the red lines, sensitivities, aspirations and goals expressed by different delegations, always aiming to serve the common good while respecting the needs and interests of each State".

The draft's provisions are largely framed as actions countries "shall" or "should" take. It calls on Parties to "manage, reduce, or not allow" certain plastic products that have a high likelihood of entering the environment, are difficult to recycle or reuse, disrupt the circular economy or contain intentionally added microplastics.

However, the draft does not set binding caps on plastic production or include a dedicated operative section on chemicals of concern, points that have been at the centre of negotiations between high-ambition countries seeking upstream measures and those favouring a focus on waste management and recycling.

Minutes after the draft's release, indigenous, frontline and fenceline communities protested outside the plenary hall. *—PTI*

China braces for heavy rains as storm Podul strikes

TADPAI/SEOUL, 14 AUG

China is on alert as Tropical Storm Podul made landfall in the southern provinces of Fujian, Guangdong, and Guangxi, prompting the evacuation of approximately 15,000 people from coastal areas. The storm, which had been downgraded from a typhoon, struck just after midnight on Thursday.

Alarms have also been raised in inland Hunan province due to concerns over potential flooding from local rivers and lakes. In Guangdong's Chaozhou city, classes were suspended, and court proceedings halted in Hong Kong as the storm approached.

Meanwhile, torrential rain in South Korea's greater capital region has claimed at least one life. The downpour, beginning early Wednesday, forced around 1,000 people to evacuate and caused widespread flooding throughout Seoul and nearby cities.

Authorities issued flood and landslide warnings.

Emergency responders rescued 145 individuals amid the chaos, while over 800 people remain displaced. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Gold climbs ₹400 to ₹1,01,420/10g

NEW DELHI, 14 AUG

Gold prices climbed Rs 400 to Rs 1,01,420 per 10g in the national capital on Thursday on fresh buying by stockists in line with firm global trends, according to the All India Sarafa Association. Gold of 99.9 per cent purity had settled at Rs 1,01,020 per 10g in the previous session. Gold of 99.5 per cent purity increased by Rs 400 to Rs 1,01,000 per 10g (inclusive of all taxes) on Thursday. It had closed at Rs 1,00,600 per 10g on Wednesday. In the national capital, silver prices rose by Rs 1,500 to Rs 1,13,500 per kg (inclusive of all taxes) on Thursday. On the global front, spot gold went up marginally to trade at USD 3,356.96 per ounce in New York. *—PTI*

Rupee falls by 10P, closes at 87.57 against USD

MUMBAI, 14 AUG

Rupee pared initial gains and settled for the day on a negative note, lower by 10 paise at 87.57 (provisional) against the US dollar on Thursday, as it came under pressure due to continued dollar demand from importers. Forex traders said the rupee pared initial gains on positive crude oil prices, dollar demand from importers and foreign fund outflows. Moreover, there is an overall negative bias amid uncertainties over the trade tariff issue between India and the US. At the interbank foreign exchange, the domestic unit opened at 87.48 and moved in a range of 87.39 to 87.67 during the day before settling at 87.57 (provisional), lower by 10 paise from its previous close. *—PTI*

Muthoot shares jump 11.51%, hit 52-week high

NEW DELHI, 14 AUG

Shares of gold loan NBFC Muthoot Finance on Thursday jumped 11.51 per cent after the firm reported a 65 per cent year-on-year surge in its consolidated profit after tax for three months ended June 2025. The stock surged 11.40 per cent to hit a 52-week high of Rs 2,797 on the BSE. At the NSE, the stock zoomed 11.51 per cent to Rs 2,799 -- its 52-week high level. Muthoot on Wednesday reported a 65 per cent year-on-year surge in consolidated profit after tax to Rs 1,974 crore for three months ended June 2025. In the same quarter last year, the company had posted a profit after tax of Rs 1,196 crore. Total income jumped 44 per cent to Rs 6,485 crore for the quarter. *—PTI*

AI to boost Indian banking operation by 46%: RBI

NEW DELHI, 14 AUG

A recent report from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) indicates that Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) could enhance banking operations in India by up to 46 per cent. The RBI highlighted that AI enables financial institutions to better understand customer behaviour, improve efficiency, and provide personalised services. The report emphasises that AI adoption across the sector is driven by the need to enhance customer experience, increase revenue, and ensure regulatory compliance. Utilizing advanced analytics, Generative AI helps manage risks, control costs, and offers alternative credit scoring models, expanding access to underserved populations. With AI chatbots revolutionising customer service, the report predicts the generative AI segment could surpass Rs 1.02 lakh crore by 2033, growing at an annual rate of 28-34 per cent. *—ANI*

WPI inflation declines to 2-year low of -0.58%

NEW DELHI, 14 AUG

Wholesale price inflation declined to a 2-year low of -0.58 per cent in July, as deflation in food and fuel kept WPI in the negative zone for the second consecutive month, government data released on Thursday showed.

Experts, however, projected WPI inflation to move back into positive territory in August, as base effects fade and seasonal price increases continue.

WPI-based inflation was 2.10 per cent in July last year, and -0.13 per cent in June.

"Negative rate of inflation in July 2025 is primarily due to a decrease in prices of food articles, mineral oils, crude petroleum & natural gas, manufacture of basic metals, etc," the industry ministry said in a statement.

According to WPI data, deflation in food articles widened to 6.29 per cent in July, as against a deflation of 3.75 per cent in June, with vegetables witnessing a sharp drop.

Deflation in vegetables was 28.96 per cent in July, compared to 22.65 per cent in June.

Fuel and power saw a negative inflation or deflation of 2.43 per cent in July, as against 2.65 per cent in June.

In the case of manufactured products, inflation was higher at 2.05 per cent in July, as against 1.97 per cent in the month before.

Barclays in a research note said that July wholesale price inflation was driven by lower food and energy prices.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), which takes into account retail inflation to decide on monetary policy, had kept benchmark policy rates unchanged at 5.5 per cent earlier this month.

The retail inflation in July dropped to an 8-year low of 1.55 per cent. *—PTI*

WPI data, deflation in food articles widened to **6.29 per cent** in July, as against a deflation of **3.75 per cent** in June, with vegetables

S&P upgrades India's rating to 'BBB' after 19 yrs

The impact of tariffs on Indian economy will be 'manageable'

NEW DELHI, 14 AUG

S&P on Thursday upgraded India's sovereign credit rating to 'BBB' with a stable outlook after a gap of nearly 19 years, citing robust economic growth, political commitment for fiscal consolidation and 'conducive' monetary policy to check inflation.

"India remains among the best performing economies in the world...The quality of government spending has improved in the past five to six years," S&P Global Ratings said.

The impact of US tariffs on the Indian economy will be "manageable", S&P said, adding that a 50 per cent tariff on US exports (if imposed) will not pose a "material drag" on growth.

"India is relatively less reliant on trade and about 60 per cent of its economic growth stems from domestic consumption," it said.

The rating upgrade by a US-based agency comes days after American President Donald Trump dubbed India as a "dead economy".

Trump has imposed the highest 50 per cent tariff on Indian goods with effect from 27 August.

S&P in January 2007 placed India on the lowest investment grade rating of 'BBB-' PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

Also, the rating upgrade will help lower borrowing cost of Indian companies in international markets.

S&P in January 2007 placed India on the lowest investment grade rating of 'BBB-'.

This is the first upgrade by a global rating agency which has rated India a notch above the lowest investment grade.

'BBB' is an investment grade rating and denotes improved ability of the country to discharge its debt obligation comfortably.

In May last year, S&P changed India's credit rating outlook to 'positive', from 'stable', and hinted that a rating upgrade could be coming in the next 24 months. *—PTI*

- The rating upgrade by a US-based agency comes days after American President Donald Trump dubbed India as a "dead economy". Trump has imposed the highest 50 per cent tariff on Indian goods with effect from 27 August

$31.77B TRADE GAP

The trade deficit during the first four months of 2025-26 was USD 94.81 billion PHOTO: PTI

Exports rise 7.29% to $37.24B in July

NEW DELHI, 14 AUG

Snapping the two-month declining streak, India's exports rebounded by 7.29 per cent to USD 37.24 billion in July, while trade deficit widened to an eight-month high of USD 27.35 billion during the month.

Official data released on Thursday also showed that imports increased by 8.6 per cent year-on-year to USD 64.59 billion in July 2025.

Trade deficit widened to USD 27.35 billion in July, the highest since November last year when the trade gap was USD 31.77 billion.

During April-July 2025-26, exports increased by 3.07 per cent to USD 149.2 billion, while imports rose 5.36 per cent to USD 244.01 billion.

The trade deficit during the first four months of 2025-26 was USD 94.81 billion.

Briefing media on the data, Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal said that despite global economic uncertainties, India's goods and services exports are doing well.

Exports have grown substantially, much higher than the global exports growth, he said. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

Mkts end flat ahead of US-Russia talks

MUMBAI, 14 AUG

Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty ended flat in a highly volatile trade on Thursday as investors turned cautious ahead of the US-Russia talks on 15 August.

Extending gains to the second day, the 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 57.75 points or 0.07 per cent to settle at 80,597.66. During the day, it rallied 211.27 points or 0.26 per cent to 80,751.18. The 50-share NSE Nifty rose by 11.95 points or 0.05 per cent to 24,631.30.

Among Sensex firms, Eternal, Infosys, Asian Paints, HDFC Bank, Bajaj Finserv and Titan were the major gainers. However, Tata Steel, Tech Mahindra, Adani Ports and Bharat Electronics were among the laggards.

The Trump-Putin meeting could have significant implications for energy markets, potentially leading to an easing of sanctions against Moscow.

BSE smallcap gauge declined 0.59 per cent and midcap index dipped 0.18 per cent. On a weekly basis, Sensex climbed 739.87 points or 0.92 per cent and Nifty edged higher by 268 points or 1.10 per cent, snapping six-week losing streak.

Markets would remain closed on Friday for Independence Day. *—PTI*

GST payment: Singapore tax authority fines Infosys Rs 66L

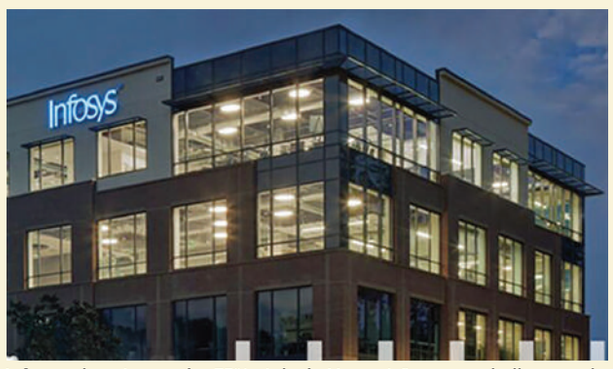
NEW DELHI, 14 AUG

Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore has imposed a penalty of 97,035 Singapore dollars (over Rs 66 lakh) on Infosys, the IT company said in a regulatory filing. The order was communicated to the company on 13 August.

According to data shared by Infosys on late Wednesday evening, the Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore, which administers and collects taxes, has levied the penalty of 97,035.9 SGD, which pertains to "Singapore GST payment for the period April 2025 to June 2025".

"There is no material impact on financials, operations or other activities of the company," Infosys said.

Meanwhile, Infosys plans to acquire 75 per cent stake in Versent Group, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Australian telecom firm Telstra, for 233.25 million Australian dollars or about Rs 1,336 crore, the company said in a regulatory filing.



Infosys plans to acquire 75% stake in Versent Group, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Australian telecom firm Telstra PHOTO: INFOSYS

The acquisition is part of strategic collaboration between Infosys and Telstra to form a joint venture to provide AI-enabled cloud and digital solutions for Australian businesses.

The company has acquired a 75 per cent stake for 233.25 million Australian dollars, about Rs 1,336 crore, through a transaction in Telstra Purple Pty, the filing said.

According to the filing, Versent Group is Telstra Purple Pty Ltd and is the integration of Versent, Epicon, Telstra Purple Digital and associated Cloud Access products.

Versent Group primarily serves large blue-chip organizations with established presence in government and education, financial institutions, energy, and the utilities sector. *—PTI*

NCLAT upholds NCLT order against Supertech Realtors

NEW DELHI, 14 AUG

The National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) has paved the way for insolvency proceedings against Supertech Realtors, the developer behind the Supernova project, which includes residential apartments, offices, retail space, and a luxury hotel.

This follows an order by the Delhi bench of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) on 12 June, 2024, that directed the initiation of Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP) based on a petition from Bank of Maharashtra citing default.

A two-member bench stated, "We are of the view that the present is a case where the resolution of Corporate Debtor (Supertech) has to be undertaken as per the I&B Code and CIRP Regulations, 2016."

Supertech Realtors, a subsidiary of Supertech, is constructing the Supernova project at an estimated cost of Rs 2,326.14 crore in Noida, featuring 80 floors at a height of 300 metres, making it the tallest building in Delhi-NCR. *—PTI*

AFTER MANY DELAYS

Cognizant to hike salaries of 80% employees in November

NEW DELHI, 14 AUG

IT services company Cognizant on Thursday said about 80 per cent of its eligible employees will receive a salary hike, effective 1 November, 2025.

The company, during its second quarter earnings, had said that it plans to award merit-based salary increases for the vast majority of employees during the second half of 2025.

"These increases will be delivered up to, and including, the Senior Associate levels. The amount of these increases will vary depending on individual performance rating and country," a Cognizant spokesperson said on Thursday. About 80 per cent of eligible employees will receive a salary hike, effective 1 November, 2025, according to the company.

In India, pay increases for consistent highest performers will be in the high single digits, the spokesperson added.

Top performers will receive the highest increases.

Earlier this year, Cognizant paid most of its associates their highest bonuses in three years. *—PTI*

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

'Govt arranges Rs 47K cr to boost BSNL network'

NEW DELHI, 14 AUG

The government is ready with another Rs 47,000 crore capex plan to boost BSNL's network, the Department of Telecom said on social media platform X on Thursday.

BSNL has spent Rs 25,000 crore in last year for installing 1 lakh towers for 4G services. "We have another close to Rs 47,000 crore capex plan in place for BSNL. Meanwhile, BSNL has done its highest-ever capex of Rs 25,000 crore during last year," the DoT said, quoting Union Telecom Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia.

IT firm TCS and a C-DoT-led consortium had bagged the majority of the Rs 25,000 crore project for the supply of telecom gear to BSNL. Scindia has asked BSNL to add customers and grow its mobile service business by 50 per cent over the next year. *—PTI*

JSW Cement & All Time Plastics shares up on debut

NEW DELHI, 14 AUG

Shares of JSW Cement Ltd made a strong debut on Thursday, listing with a premium of over 4 per cent against the issue price of Rs 147. The stock opened at Rs 153 on the BSE, marking a 4 per cent increase from the issue price, and later climbed by as much as 5.23 per cent, reaching Rs 154.70. On the NSE, it listed at Rs 153.50, up 4.42 per cent. The company's initial public offer (IPO) garnered 7.77 times the subscription by Monday's closing day.

All Time Plastics Ltd

Consumerware products manufacturer All Time Plastics Ltd experienced a splendid market debut on Thursday, listing at over 14 per cent premium to its issue price of Rs 275. The stock commenced trading at Rs 314.30 on the BSE, representing a 14.29 per cent rise, and later surged 17.14 per cent to Rs 322.15. At the NSE, it opened at Rs 311.30, a 13.2 per cent increase. IPO raised Rs 401 crore and was oversubscribed by 8.34 times by end of trading.

Mangal Electrical & Amansa Investments

Transformer components manufacturer Mangal Electrical Industries fixed a price band of Rs 533 to Rs 561 per share for its upcoming Rs 400 crore, opening on 20 August till 22 August.

Additionally Amansa Investments Ltd has invested Rs 250 crore in pharma formulation firm Rubicon Research Ltd through a pre-IPO funding round. *—PTI*

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

Liverpool set to sign Italian defender Leoni

LIVERPOOL, 14 AUG

Liverpool manager Arne Slot confirmed on Thursday that an agreement had been reached with Parma to sign teenage defender Giovanni Leoni. The 18-year-old Leoni previously played for Padova and Sampdoria before impressing at Parma after joining in the offseason of 2024. He is an Italy Under-19 international. "The clubs have agreed on a deal, but he hasn't signed for us yet," Slot said of Leoni, "so the moment when he signs for us, I can go into more detail." Slot, however, refused to discuss any potential deal for another center back, England international Marc Guehi, and said any comments would need to come from his club, Crystal Palace. *—PTI*

Maxwell sharpens his skills for 2026 T20 World Cup

CAIRNS, 14 AUG

With an eye on next year's T20 World Cup in the Indian subcontinent, charismatic Australia all-rounder Glenn Maxwell is sharpening his spin-bowling skills to become more potent in the powerplay overs, given that he might need to bowl with the new ball on spinner-friendly pitches. The 2026 T20 World Cup will be jointly hosted by India and Sri Lanka with the spin-bowling all-rounder likely to be a part of the Australian side as it aims to reclaim the trophy it last won in 2021. Maxwell has been a regular in the Indian Premier League, donning several jerseys with his most successful stints coming for Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Punjab Kings, where he has shone as a devastating batter with the ability to turn the game decisively with the ball. *—PTI*

Schauffele in danger of missing FedEx Cup finale

OWINGS MILLS, 14 AUG

Xander Schauffele knows where he will be the last weekend in September, having already clinched a spot on the US team for the Ryder Cup. The immediate concern is where he goes next week. Not since he was a PGA Tour rookie in 2017 has Schauffele, who won two majors a year ago, been outside the top 30 in the FedEx Cup going into the all-important BMW Championship. He tied for 20th, advanced to East Lake and won the Tour Championship. Every year since then, he already has locked up his spot in the Tour Championship by now. This has been a different kind of year, and now Schauffele is at No. 43 and in danger of missing the FedEx Cup finale for the first time. *—PTI*

Gill or Jaiswal: Who will make it to Asia Cup?

Selectors are likely to announce squad by 20 August

NEW DELHI, 14 AUG

With the T20 Asia Cup kicking off on 9 September, Indian selectors face a dilemma: Shubman Gill or Yashasvi Jaiswal? Both top-order batters have had strong seasons, but with India's top three seemingly locked — Abhishek Sharma, Sanju Samson, and Tilak Varma — one may miss out.

Gill, fresh off a stellar England Test tour where he amassed 754 runs with four centuries, remains a strong ODI performer (2,775 runs in 55 matches). While not a T20 regular recently, he impressed in IPL 2025 with 650 runs at a strike rate of 156. Overall, he has 893 runs in 22 T20s since the last T20 World Cup at an average of 47 and SR of 147, including eight fifties.

However, India's T20 setup has evolved. Abhishek's explosive form — 1,363 runs at a strike rate nearing 200 since the T20 WC — and Tilak's consistency (1,200 runs, SR 153.84) have solidified their spots. Samson, now excelling as an opener and wicketkeeper, adds further value, scoring 908 runs at SR 157 since the WC. Skipper Suryakumar Yadav remains pivotal despite patchy form.

Jaiswal, too, made a strong case with 723 runs in 23 T20Is at a strike rate over 164. His IPL 2025 season (559 runs at SR 160) and Test heroics (391 vs Australia, 411 vs England) highlight his versatility. Notably, he was the back-up opener at the last T20 World Cup ahead of Gill.

With only 15 spots available, and the Asia Cup squad likely mirroring the T20 World Cup roster, India may have to choose between the two. Samson's dual role and the Abhishek-Tilak-Samson combination make it harder for both Gill and Jaiswal to find space. Ultimately, selectors must decide who offers more impact — Gill's consistency or Jaiswal's explosiveness. *—ANI*

Gukesh beats Caruana in St Louis

Standings after Rapid (Round 9):

Caruana: 14 pts	Shankland: 5
Aronian: 13	Oparin: 3
Vachier-Lagrave: 11	5-7. Dominguez, Abdusattorov, Wesley: 9
Gukesh: 10	
Liem: 7	

ST LOUIS, 14 AUG

World Champion D Gukesh bounced back from an early defeat to finish fourth in the rapid section of the St. Louis Rapid and Blitz, part of the Grand Chess Tour 2025. The Indian prodigy lost to Leinier Dominguez Perez but recovered with back-to-back wins over American duo Wesley So and Fabiano Caruana.

It was the third consecutive day Gukesh began with a loss, yet he managed to secure 10 points and end the rapid leg on a high note. With 18 blitz games remaining in the USD 175,000 tournament, Gukesh remains in strong contention.

Caruana, despite his final-round loss to Gukesh, topped the rapid standings with 14 points. He is closely followed by Levon Aronian (13 points), while France's Maxime Vachier-Lagrave sits third with 11.

Gukesh trails Vachier-Lagrave by a single point. Dominguez, So, and Uzbekistan's Nodirbek Abdusattorov share fifth place on nine points. Vietnam's Liem Le Quang is eighth with seven points, while Sam Shankland (5) and Grigoriy Oparin (3) round out the bottom two.

In Round 7, Gukesh lost to Dominguez after misplaying a promising middle-game position, allowing a decisive invasion on the seventh rank. He rebounded in Round 8, defeating Wesley So, who collapsed under pressure. Gukesh then stunned Caruana in Round 9, overturning a difficult position after the American blundered. *—PTI*

PSG's Marquinhos lifts the trophy with teammates after the UEFA Super Cup soccer match between Paris Saint-Germain and Tottenham Hotspur in Udine, Italy **PHOTO: PTI**

PSG beats Tottenham in penalty shootout to win UEFA

PARIS, 14 AUG

Paris Saint-Germain staged a dramatic late comeback to beat Tottenham Hotspur in a penalty shootout and win the UEFA Super Cup, their fifth trophy of 2025. However, the triumph was overshadowed by racial abuse directed at Tottenham forward Mathys Tel following the match.

Trailing 2-0 in the 85th minute at Stadio Friuli in Udine, PSG clawed their way back through late strikes from Lee Kang-in and Gonçalo Ramos — the equaliser arriving in stoppage time. In the ensuing shootout, despite Vitinha missing PSG's first penalty, Tottenham failed to capitalise. Micky van de Ven and Tel missed from the spot, while PSG scored four in a row, with Nuno Mendes netting the winner.

Coach Luis Enrique admitted PSG were "very lucky" to escape defeat, noting his side had only returned to training six days earlier following a packed 2024-25 campaign.

Lucas Chevalier, PSG's new goalkeeper replacing Gianluigi Donnarumma, had a turbulent debut — at fault for Cristian Romero's header and unlucky with van de Ven's opener — but redeemed himself by saving a penalty in the shootout. Tottenham boss Thomas Frank, in his first competitive game in charge, praised his team's performance: "The players were almost perfect. Their mentality was unbelievable."

The mood soured after the game as Tottenham condemned racist abuse directed at Tel, who missed his penalty. The 20-year-old, who joined from Bayern Munich this summer, was abused on social media. *—PTI*

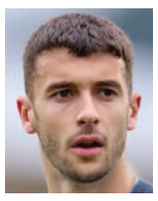
UEFA banner says 'Stop killing children' as players of PSG and Tottenham line up before their Super Cup final **PHOTO: X/@UEFA**

Barca to register goalkeeper García as Stegen is hurt

MADRID, 14 AUG

Barcelona will be able to register newly signed goalkeeper Joan García for the new season after the Spanish league confirmed a long-term injury to Marc-André ter Stegen, the club said on Wednesday.

With the ruling, Barcelona is allowed to clear some salary-cap space and more easily register other players without breaching financial fair play rules.



"Barcelona, hereby, announces that La Liga's Medical Committee has ruled that goalkeeper Marc-André ter Stegen's injury meets the long-term injury criteria established by current regulations. The club will proceed tomorrow to immediately formalize the registration of player Joan García," the announcement said.

The length of the injury had sparked a dispute between Barcelona and Ter Stegen, who initially refused to sign the medical report that the Catalan Club had to send to the league. The 33-year-old goalkeeper said it would take about three months for him to recover from lower back surgery last month. The club, however, said it would take longer and wanted to add him to the long-term injury list. After Ter Stegen refused to sign the report, the club opened a disciplinary proceeding and stripped him of his captaincy. It reinstated him after he signed the report last week.

Ter Stegen said after signing the report that he never intended to make it difficult for Barcelona to sign new players, and only wanted to be able to return to action as soon as possible. *—PTI*

Man City case: Premier League calls for patience

LONDON, 14 AUG

The Premier League's top official called for patience on Wednesday while the seismic legal case involving Manchester City drags on into another season. City was charged by the league with more than 100 financial breaches, including providing misleading information about its sources of income, in February 2023.

The case was heard by an independent commission between September and December last year, but no verdict has been reached. Punishment could be as extreme as expulsion from the top flight. City has always denied the charges.

The issue hangs over the start of another Premier League campaign, with the 2025-26 season starting on Friday. But Richard Masters, the competition's chief executive, reiterated the league has no control or say over the timings.

Asked in an interview with British broadcaster Sky Sports News why the league could not hurry the process along, Masters said: "I can't answer that specific question. All I can tell you about is the system and how it works.

"I mean, it's an independent judiciary, essentially. So once the allegations, the charge, has been put forward, they go before an independent panel, which is independently selected, and they are then in charge of the process and its timings. They hear the case, they decide the outcome, and we have no influence over that, over it or its timing. That's right from an independence point of view. My frustration is irrelevant," he added. *—PTI*

Rooney 'unhappy' with Brady over work ethic jibe

LONDON, 14 AUG

England soccer great Wayne Rooney is upset with Tom Brady after some pointed comments were made by the NFL superstar in a fly-on-the-wall documentary.

Brady became a minority owner of English club Birmingham City in 2023 and was involved in a docuseries — "Built in Birmingham" — that went behind the scenes at the team that was briefly managed by Rooney, the former Manchester United forward.

In one clip that quickly spread over social media, Brady said he was "a little worried about our head coach's work ethic." That remark referred to Rooney, who lasted just 83 days as manager before being fired as Birmingham slipped down the second-tier Championship.

Rooney has responded to the seven-time Super Bowl champion in his new role as a pundit for the BBC, saying Brady's comment was "very unfair."

"Tom came in once, which was the day before a game, which is a little bit lighter anyway," Rooney said in an interview with the BBC published on Thursday, "and I don't think he really understood football that well at the time. Maybe he does now. *—PTI*

THE GOOD DOC

Vece, Olympic hockey medallist & Leander Paes' dad, no more

30 APRIL, 1945

14 AUG, 2025

NEW DELHI, 14 AUG

Dr Vece Paes, an Olympic medallist, pioneering sports physician, and mentor to generations of Indian athletes, breathed his last on Thursday morning in Kolkata at the age of 80. He had been battling multiple age-related ailments, including Parkinson's disease.

A centre-half in the Indian hockey team that won Bronze at the 1972 Munich Olympics, Dr Paes was much more than a player. He became a transformative figure in Indian sport, lending his expertise across disciplines long after his playing days ended.

A quiet, mild-mannered man with exceptional intelligence and humility, Paes transitioned into sports medicine with the same commitment that had defined his playing career. His post-retirement contributions benefited Indian hockey, cricket, football, and tennis alike.

"He was so dedicated to sports medicine that he fully concentrated on it after his hockey career. He helped a number of Indian athletes," said Ajit Pal Singh, his teammate from the 1972 Olympics.

Decades later, former hockey captain Viren Rasquinha encountered Dr Paes as team doctor during the Athens 2004 Olympics. "They don't make them like Doc anymore. So knowledgeable, so warm, so kind... You were the absolute best," Rasquinha posted on X.

Dr Paes also had a deep and lasting influence on Indian tennis, serving as doctor to the Davis Cup team for over a decade and managing the career of his son, Leander Paes. The father-son duo formed one of Indian sport's most iconic partnerships, with Leander often crediting his father's mentorship as key to his own achievements.

Born in Lucknow and educated at La Martiniere College and Kolkata's prestigious Presidency College, Dr Paes combined academic brilliance with sporting excellence. He was a rare polymath in Indian sports—an Olympian who later became a vital presence in sports medicine and administration.

Beyond hockey, Dr Paes dabbled in divisional-level football, cricket, and rugby. He served as president of the Indian Rugby Football Union from 1996 to 2002 and was also president of the Calcutta Cricket and Football Club (CCFC). His influence stretched further into Indian cricket, where he was part of the BCCI's anti-doping programme and worked with the Asian Cricket Council.

He collaborated with East Bengal football club on the insistence of coach Subhas Bhowmick, assisting top players like former India captain Bhaichung Bhutia.

"It is a very sad day for Indian sports, especially hockey," said Ajit Pal Singh. "He was highly educated and soft-spoken. We both played as centre-halves in the 1972 Olympics team, and he was terrific. He used to guide me despite being only slightly older." Former teammate and hockey legend BP Govinda described Paes as "super talented both in sport and sports medicine." Govinda believed that internal politics denied Dr Paes a place in the 1968 Olympics squad. "But he never complained. He just wanted to give back to sport, which he did in many ways. Leander is a prime example of that."

Harbinder Singh, another teammate from the 1972 squad, echoed similar sentiments. "He was a true gentleman... a very good distributor and tackler, and he had a strong physique too. I played a lot against him in the domestic circuit. He represented Bengal; I played for Railways."

Dr Paes is survived by his wife Jennifer Paes, a former national basketball player, and their son Leander.

His legacy is etched not just in India's Olympic history, but in the many sports where his quiet brilliance, knowledge, and generosity left an enduring mark. *—PTI*